23
JUNE 1988

A SOVIET WEEKLY
OF WORLD AFFAIRS

NEW TIMES

Buying and selling abroad.
What and how?

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ONE MORE STEP

Perestroika through the eyes of a Chinese journalist

Drawing by Igor Smirnov

NEW TIMES

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SUMMIT

President Reagan's Moscow visit and his meetings and talks with Mikhail Gorbachev mark a new stage in the development of Soviet-American dialogue.

(See pp. 5-9.)

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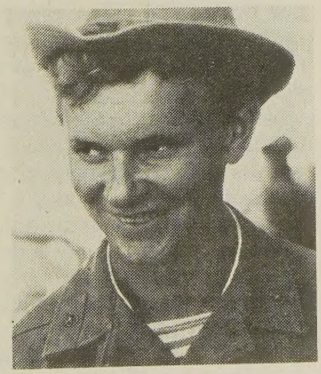

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This drawing was sent in by the Indian artist T. Venkatrao who writes that it is his "humble support to the great event and great cause" on the eve of the Moscow summit.

OPINION

A letter to the Kremlin

Stig Dahlgren
Brottby, Sweden

Dear Mr Gorbachev,

I have followed your meetings with President Reagan with great interest. Then I bought your book "Perestroika" and read it attentively. I am not a Communist, but I found your ideas interesting.

As I understand it, you are now considered by many people to be a true world leader. This is the first time in history that the whole world has put its faith in only one man.

I would like to take the opportunity to say a few words about the submarines that are constantly bothering us along the Swedish coasts. As you probably know, we don't know for sure if they come from a Warsaw pact country or a NATO pact country or both. If they come from a Warsawpact country – please, Mr Gorbachev, try to stop it. Their appearance in our territorial waters does nothing to encourage peace and stability in the world. I have a feeling that these submarines are bothering us in such a way that they want us Swedes to know that they are there.

Sooner or later we will have the necessary technology to apprehend one of these submarines. Whether it then turns out to be a submarine from the East or the West, it will be regarded as an indication, and a very serious one, by politicians throughout the world "that we need more guns and bombs to protect ourselves."

The world is already seething with madness and stupidity, both in the East and in the West. We are in desperate need of evidence that there is less and less need for guns, so that we can all work together in the way you suggested in "Perestroika." When you and President Reagan signed the agreement, it was regarded as a turning point from more to fewer guns. We don't want another turning point from fewer guns to more guns!

I read in your book that many Americans as well as other people feel that your country is a military threat to the rest of the world. Although Russia has the largest army in the world, I really don't believe you are a military threat. I have never felt any military threat from your country, not even when a Russian submarine appeared in the south of Sweden. However, I regard the presence of submarines deep inside Swedish territorial waters as a stupid and needless act of aggression.

Both the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. today have a military force that is far beyond reason. This enormous strength has been gradually built up by a handful of politicians in both countries to protect themselves from each other. Those politicians saw all kinds of threats everywhere that don't really exist. At the same time, ordinary people in America and Russia are very eager to communicate with each other in a friendly way. One can see many examples of this daily on TV. If either America or Russia suddenly started unconditionally to reduce their nuclear power to zero or their conventional army to 10 per cent, what would happen? Probably nothing at all! Except perhaps that the other side would burst out laughing with relief and do the same.

From the Editors: Yet another letter addressed to M.S. Gorbachev (see No. 22/88) and another suggestion of how to do away with the "enemy image." Each country probably has its own specific remedy – the abolition of submarines or the elimination of the word "enemy" from the political lexicon. So let us all of us get down together and pinpoint what it is that prevents us from seeing the representatives of other countries as friends and reliable partners in resolving common problems, which frequently turn into very painful ones.

GLASNOST

A MATTER AT ISSUE

Boris Mozhayev, writer
Moscow, U.S.S.R.

■ I should like to share my impressions of the way candidates were elected as delegates to the All-Union 19th Party Conference by the Moscow writers' organization.

I was shocked by the inertia of the writers. There wasn't even a quorum at the meeting – only just over 200 attended it. The list of candidates to be voted on included G. Baklanov, V. Korotich, A. Mikhailov, and Y. Chernichenko. The fact that G. Baklanov, a man who has never changed the colour of his skin, never compromised himself, a serious writer and an editor, who turned the third-rate magazine Znamya into a profound publication that carries great weight, failed to win the necessary number of votes, speaks of the weakness of our writers' organization and its inability to judge the situation correctly today – both in the country and in the Party, as well as in our writers' union. For many people this candidate, and the elections themselves, did not turn out as they wanted. Moreover, we learned that a number of writers living in Moscow, including M. Alexeyev and A. Ivanov, had already been included on the list of candidates for election as delegates to the conference and that we would have no opportunity to discuss them or vote for or against them – we had no right to do so as it would be done by Party organizations in other enterprises and departments.

I am convinced that the elections should not be turned into a formality. Writers should elect not only worthy and well-known people, but those who display a deep and progressive understanding of life, who have an absolutely clean slate, and have never in any way blotted their copybooks by compromise. For we have to remember that in Russia a writer is much more than a mere storyteller.

AN INQUIRING LETTER

W. Gilbert
Tours, France

This letter is my small personal contribution to perestroika.

On October 1, 1986, I bought a Lada-Samara car. It is easy to drive and has nice lines. (Cheers for your designers!) Fuel consumption is satisfactory (but could be better). The level of comfort suits me, though that of cars manufactured in the capitalist countries is higher. All in all, considering its price, I would have been perfectly satisfied if it had not been for numerous "buts."

On the very first day I had to have the pump for the windscreen sweepers replaced. Then my car came to an abrupt halt in the middle of the road because of a poor contact on the panel under the dashboard. A little later – another breakdown in the middle of the city: the electronic ignition had gone on the blink. The representative of AvtoVAZ who put this right also changed the wires connecting the ignition to the sparking plug, as its resistance was too great. That meant that the car had been fitted with unsuitable parts and other buyers could come up against the same problem. I also had to turn to the representative of AvtoVAZ (and, I'm afraid, not for the last time) to deal with an oil leak. Since the guarantee period is not yet over, I was serviced free of charge. But!

I had to go to the service station three times to get a pump for the windscreen sweepers that did not leak. One would think that the suppliers deliberately sabotaged them. I had to make four trips to deal with the oil leak and get the gear box checked. After that "check," the pedal did not work properly. I could go on and on. In other words, each time I drive the car in the city I find myself wondering what will go wrong next.

In addition to the technical faults, servicing by your personnel leaves much to be desired. I came up against incompetence and simply slipshod work. The technician at your servicing station even managed to wreck the bonnet when he slammed it shut after working on the engine. As a result it would neither shut properly nor open. It's true, he admitted his fault, mended the bonnet, painted it and mended the lock. But for all that I had to make a hundred trips to the station.

Surely it's in your interests to produce if not good cars, at least well-trained specialists?

What can I say if someone asks me (and this has nothing to do with politics or your country) if I am pleased with my car? So many bad things are said here about the Soviet Union that I would prefer not to answer. Perhaps I have simply been unlucky? But official statistics indicate that Lada is listed among the cars that require repairing most frequently.

Soviet designers should strive for world standards in their work. All who take part in assemblying the car, from top to bottom, should clearly realize the damage their bad work is doing to the prestige of their country. If that happens, then I am sure you will be able greatly to increase sales of your cars in our country.

AN ARTIST'S COMMENT

Drawing by N. Shcherbakov

Carrying on the discussion

V. Dolonkovsky
Tallinn, U.S.S.R.

I've been a reader of New Times for over twenty years, but this is the first time I've decided to write to you. Although I haven't the faintest hope of seeing it published, I would very much like to see it in print.

GLASNOST

Like many readers of the magazine, I should like to continue the discussion on our history, but to look at the problem from a different angle. For many years we did not dare tell the truth, not only ourselves, but also our friends in the socialist countries. Yet all the shortcomings about which we speak openly today, and especially the departure from the principles of socialism, existed in practically all those countries. The Stalin personality cult and its aftermath – the period of stagnation – caused immense harm not only to the Soviet Union, but also to our friends abroad. We avoided criticism of ourselves and of the socialist countries. That was the result of our lack of principle and our political timidity. As a result, a blow was dealt to the prestige of socialism on a world scale.

Let us tell our friends the whole truth about them and hope they will repay us in kind. It is the ordinary people who stand to gain from such frankness in our relations, those who in the days of the distortion of socialist principles were the first to suffer moral and material losses. Let us do everything to ensure that our socialist community flourishes.

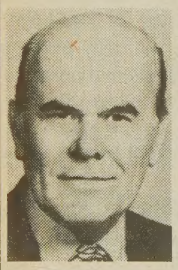
PRIVATE OPINION

VALERY CHICHKANOV, Corresponding Member of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Director, Institute of Economics, Urals Branch of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences

The Theses are a product of new thinking, both in content and, no less importantly, in form: they voice the collective opinions of the Central Committee rather than pronounce final judgements. We shall give them serious discussion, which calls for much more intelligence, daring and knowledge than merely applauding our unanimous approval, as would have been the case in the recent past.

The Theses stress that economic perestroika is the principal means of accelerating our scientific and technological progress, and that's very true. Let us make this perfectly clear: technological innovations cannot be imposed by force. Although the cleverer ones are always effort-saving, not all of them have always suited the interests of this or that work collective.

The Theses suggest no specific ways out of the situation, for the simple reason that these have still to be found. But the goal has been set in no uncertain terms: the problem must be solved by economic means.



JOZSEF PALFY, Chairman of the Union of Journalists, Hungary

There are some words and expressions that we somewhat tarnished by frequent repetition. Still, I shall use one of them: a historic summit has taken place in Moscow. Apart from the agreements which have emerged from it, I consider its most important results to be the reaffirmation by the participants of their intention to carry on the dialogue on the vital problems of today, and the promise of new substantial arms cuts. Frankly, what concerns us Hungarians most is not so much the question of sea-launched cruise missiles, as the problems connected with the reduction of armed forces and armaments in Europe. I see indications that progress is to be made on this issue too. If agreements are reached on reducing strategic offensive arms and discarding plans for star wars, the world will heave a sigh of relief.

Much has been said at the Moscow summit about human rights. I hope President Reagan has satisfied himself that impressive progress has been made in the U.S.S.R. in this sphere. The American guest has seen with his own eyes the glasnost and perestroika which, he admitted, were previously known to him only from Mikhail Gorbachev's book.

HANS-DIETRICH GENSCHER, Minister of Foreign Affairs, the F.R.G.

The Soviet-American summit in Moscow is an important European event as well. The rapprochement between the two great powers is particularly in the interests of Europeans.

The INF treaty should give an impetus to disarmament in all spheres – especially in the sphere of conventional arms, where the East has geographical advantages. Moreover, it possesses superiority in important weapon systems such as tanks and artillery. We are therefore seeking parity at a lower level.

But we also want more than that – namely, a system of cooperative security for Europe which would leave neither side with a chance to mount a surprise attack or large-scale offensive operations.

We also hope that the summit will give a positive impulse to political and economic relations and cultural exchanges between East and West. Security can no longer be guaranteed by military means alone.

Having resolved a number of human rights issues, simplified its exit procedure, met the Western demand for on-the-spot control over the observance of disarmament agreements and started the withdrawal of its troops from Afghanistan, the Soviet Union has proved that Gorbachev's words are followed by action. This Soviet policy – along with a critical analysis of the U.S.S.R.'s past foreign policy, plus domestic reforms – makes for further progress in East-West relations. For all the problems still to be dealt with, we now have a historic chance which is not to be missed.

Through economic cooperation we seek to achieve increased stability, share more interests, build higher levels of confidence, and thus make our advance towards greater security irreversible. In the nuclear age, mankind has become a survival society.

The Federal Republic of Germany intends to remain the motive force of rapprochement between East and West in the future as well. Good relations between the F.R.G. and the U.S.S.R. are important to the rest of Europe. In the development of East-West relations, Europe must play a role that befits its influence and suits its interests.

The fourth step

A dialogue between our correspondents

Galina Sidorova and Alexander Pumpyansky are our specialists on Soviet-American relations. Last month Galina Sidorova interviewed George Shultz, while Alexander Pumpyansky was our special correspondent at the Reykjavik and Washington summits.

Alexander Pumpyansky. When two journalists meet, the dialogue is all the more interesting when they hold different views. That hardly applies in this case. I think that we both believe in the possibility of and necessity for an improvement in Soviet-American relations, that our hearts are with people's diplomacy, while our heads endorse the positive factors that have emerged recently in diplomacy as such. And neither of us can call himself a pure optimist, even less so a dyed-in-the-wool pessimist. Nevertheless, let's see how our dialogue goes.

Galina Sidorova. A dialogue of like-minded.

A.P. How would you sum up the results of the summit?

G.S. At the press centre I heard the expression: "an inflated summit." In other words, what kind of summit is it if no sensational new disarmament treaty has been signed? Yes, the agreements that were signed were of second priority, nothing sensational. But I see the significance of this meeting of the leaders of the two biggest powers as residing particularly in the fact that dialogue is becoming the norm, a natural thing, and the meetings are increasingly becoming working meetings. That is a sign of the times. A symbol. A sign of the genuine normalization of Soviet-American relations. Not for nothing did Mikhail Gorbachev speak so simply and quietly at the start of the summit of the possibility of a fifth such meeting with President Reagan to sign a treaty on a 50 per cent cut in strategic offensive weapons, if it were ready.

What do you think?

A.P. Miracles, unfortunately, do not happen, but I feel we are on the right track.

G.S. An assumption has to be supported.

A.P. Yes, and to do that a whole dissertation is sometimes required. Soviet-American relations remind me of an old forest, something out of a fairy tale, bewitched by malevolent spirits, where the atmosphere is full of expectation, where

the shadows of the past lurk under every bush, and the main danger is your own fear, and where even the nearest thing seems out of reach.

On the one hand, it seems that in principle everything about Soviet-American relations is clear, as in East-West relations in general. We have reached an impasse long ago. The amount of weapons accumulated are enough for several world catastrophes. Further confrontation would be suicidal... On the other, everything is so entangled by ideological prejudice, political aspirations from the past, and all kinds of egoism, that the obvious often looks incredible. And that's the way at every step – big or small.

In Reykjavik only a stroke of the pen seemed to separate us from a non-nuclear world. It was no mirage, no daydream in Höfdi House, but things did not go as far as the signing of any documents. The West with one voice proclaimed nuclear disarmament a Utopia... In Washington they began to go slow, they began with a 4 per cent treaty – in the nuclear stockpiles of medium- and shorter-range missiles, but in the hope of advancing much more swiftly. The next step was to be a giant one – a 50 per cent cut in strategic arsenals, and it was to have been completed in Moscow. So far, that hasn't happened.

Of course, it is a much more complex treaty, and it requires much greater work, a large share of which has, incidentally, already been done, but it was obvious in advance that the treaty would not be allowed to be concluded. Back in April, Ambassador Alexei Obukhov, who came to Moscow for the Shultz-Shevardnadze talks complained that his American colleagues in Geneva were not behaving at all as they had done in the run-up to the December meeting. Then they had instructions to prepare the INF treaty and work went quickly and well, while now they were more preoccupied with routine tasks. It looks as if Washington has not made up its mind. The Senate hearings on the INF treaty dragged on right up to the Moscow summit. President Reagan received the news of its ratification when he was already in Helsinki, even though the majority of the Senators supported it. There could have been only one for this stalling – it was a signal to the President not to hurry with the next treaty. Unfortunately, political America is not ready for radical disarmament measures.

G.S. That sounds like the soliloquy of a disappointed optimist. Incidentally the recent political manoeuvering in Washington has clearly affected public opinion in our country. Here are the results of a poll conducted on the eve of the summit by the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences' Institute of Sociological Research: 66 per cent of respondents described the changes in Soviet-American relations as considerable but unstable; 10 per cent as insubstantial and temporary; 3 per cent believe that nothing has changed; and 12 per cent remain undecided. For my part, I would note that, apart from the difficulties of the START treaty, it is in itself something of psychological barrier. Because the two sides have to exchange information on the types of weapon that at present form the basis of their national security, and 50 per cent of this basis is supposed to be destroyed, while the other 50 per cent will be preserved.

A.P. Few people will, of course, be inspired by the knowledge that a move that is more than justified from the point of view of mutual security, economics, politics and morality, a move clearly supported by public opinion in the two countries and the world as a whole, has go

Since 1959...

Journalists do not interview journalists, as a rule. However, Hans-Ulrich Kempski, who has covered the Moscow Summit for Munich's Süddeutsche Zeitung, is not just a journalist. He is "an eyewitness of the century," as it were.

N.T. Herr Kempski, you seem to be the only journalist present here to have attended all the Soviet-American Summits. Is that right?

K. Indeed, since 1959 I have covered all the Summits, of which there already have been 12. Not counting, of course, the quadripartite Foreign Ministers' meetings held right after the war.

N.T. Which Summit do you have the most vivid memories of?

K. The first one, of course – after all, it was "the world premiere" of summit diplomacy and, besides, the circumstances surrounding the Summit were unusual. Upon arriving in the U.S.A., Nikita Khrushchev crossed the American continent to meet President Eisenhower in Camp David. Everything was unusual then, even the Summit participants were groping in the dark. No one knew how matters would proceed. A beginning was made at Camp David, where the famous "Camp David spirit" was born, and where the process of détente had its early start. Unfortunately, this spirit soon petered out...

N.T. Was the first Summit unusual for the press, too?

K. Of course it was. We operated on a rather modest scale then by modern stadards. There were only 120 of us, mostly newspapermen and radio reporters. In those days television was not as common as it is now, except in the U.S.A. But then we had the rare chance of being in personal contact with Khrushchev on the trans-American train.

N.T. How did "Summit diplomacy" go later on?

K. Khrushchev met with Kennedy in Vienna in 1961, and Brezhnev met with Richard Nixon in 1972, 1973 and 1974; with Ford in 1974 and 1975; and with Carter in 1979. In that series of meetings, I'd single out one which appears of special importance to me.

N.T. Which one?

K. The meeting between President Johnson and Alexei Kosygin in Glassboro in 1967. From a journalist's viewpoint, its outcome turned out to be unexpected, dramatic even. Kosygin arrived in New York for a U.N. session, and the meeting took place unexpectedly in suburban Glassboro. No one knew what the matter was. We had no way of knowing then that U.S. Defence Secretary McNamara had arrived at the conclusion that it was necessary to curb the arms race, which was going full blast and which was, in fact, having an overpowering effect on the international situation as a whole. In Glassboro, the arms race limitation issue first topped the agenda to remain the No. 1 subject of discussions to this day.

N.T. What about Reykjavik? Didn't it witness dramatic developments, too?

K. That was a Summit in a class by itself. It was so crowded with events following each other in rapid succession that we really grasped their real purport much later, with hindsight, so to say. We didn't quite understand what was going on and how the wind was blowing, and then came the highlight of the Summit – Mikhail Gorbachev's press conference. I credit him with the outstanding achievement of turning defeat into victory and making Reykjavik an extraordinary stimulus to further advance, including that of Summit diplomacy.

There have been different meetings, of course. I would describe the Brezhnev-Carter meeting in Vienna as melancholy. Some of the dialogues produced important documents – I mean the Summits of 1972 and 1973, for instance – and, of course, the recent Summit in Washington!

N.T. Is there any general conclusion to be drawn?

K. It seems to me that Summit diplomacy has become an integral part of the international process. Now that highly developed political apparata exist, personal meetings between heads of state have assumed signal importance. Although not to be abused, of course, these summit meetings are becoming the "ultima ratio," – the ultimate argument – to use a legal term. In any case, the ultimate argument is the need to prevent war.

bogged down somewhere in the American political labyrinth, and in the conservatism of the American Establishment. You will of course have noticed how the small, but persistent and noisy filibustering minority that tried to strangle the INF treaty in the Senate was made up of a very definite group of people, neither Democrats, nor Republicans, but Conservatives from both parties. And when it comes to a treaty that will change the situation much more radically, there are many more conservatives. And it's not because they find it impossible to pronounce the words "Farewell to arms!" but because they find it even harder to say: "Hello, Moscow!" They've become so accustomed to confrontation that they feel uncomfortable in a world without a "beloved enemy": their entire philosophy, way of thinking and way of life is built up around the idea of an enemy. Take it away, and the customary justifications and explanations will collapse – their world will collapse.

And if one wants to indulge in a bit of philosophizing then it has to be said that the Conservatives in both systems need the "enemy image" to counteract the processes of public self-awareness, self-criticism, cleansing, and humanization and the triumph of the ideals common to the whole of mankind.

G.S. In that connection, the phenomenon of Reagan himself is interesting. "Mr President, how do you feel here in the heart of the Kremlin?" There in St.George's Hall, President Reagan did not reply to this question put to him by an American newsman the moment the welcoming speeches had ended. Either he felt he could not upset the protocol of the ceremony, or he failed to catch it. But it made me wonder: how would a person feel in the Kremlin, a person who 8 years ago, when assuming office, intended to have nothing to do with the Russians on arms control, a man who probably has more ideological hang-ups than any other American President in the past decades.

And I recall the way we journalists viewed, one might say in a cowboy manner, the actor-turned-President. A President who was not very well up on international affairs, not a professional politician, and in addition with an entirely negative attitude towards the Soviet Union. How easily we indulged in the overuse of somber colours to paint the portrait of America. We rarely used half tints, let alone brighter colours.

But Reagan became the President in whose term of office the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. achieved the most fruitful relations. Five years ago, when I found myself in the backwoods of the North-Eastern states, I was virtually certain that in the next few years results could be obtained only by people's diplomacy, but not by politics. Although, to tell the truth, then, too, I was convinced that the development of contacts between people would promote the overall normalization that we would come to sooner or later.

A.P. Quick results would be a miracle in Soviet-American relations. But such miracles are unfortunately impossible yet, no matter how much we might want them. But progress is already perceptible. That's why I said we're on the right track. After all, this is the fourth summit, and the foreign ministers have met 27 times in 30 months – someone even suggested that this deserved mention in the Guinness Book of Records. Certainly, it's a very useful record. So work is proceeding all the time, not always visible to the uninitiated, but mutual understanding is increasing, and we are learning to cooperate with each other.

G.S. My attitude to the two ministers is probably a very special one. Eduard Shevardnadze and George Shultz, without any sensations, quietly and in a businesslike manner, sometimes even imperceptibly, have been pushing forward the huge cart of accumulated Soviet-American problems, gradually removing from it first one, then another problem. They got things going for the present and recent agreements, and spurred on the experts who got so easily bogged down in Geneva in the arithmetic and technical details of the negotiations.And all the time

SETTING DOWN TO NORMAL

they were on the move from one part of the world to another. Each went his own way, but both towards a single goal – the normalization of relations between our countries.

In April, when George Shultz was answering my question about his length of service in this administration, he gave as his reason that he was in agreement with the President on the main issues. The Secretary of State was being overmodest. In my view, it is his pragmatic and purposeful stand, tactfully suggested to the White House incumbent, that in many respects promoted the present administration's turn towards realism in Soviet-American relations and to their present normalization.

The present normalization of Soviet-American relations is not, of course, a personal choice, and should be chalked up to the personal credit of the partners in the talks, although the personal factor and definite sympathies in policy cannot be disregarded. That choice was dictated by the internal logic of the two countries' mutual interests.

A.P. Let's talk about the internal logic of the fourth summit, what each side stressed, what its priorities were. Especially since it is very easy to follow. From the very first moves – from the very first speeches – the leaders revealed their plans and formulated the agenda as they saw it. The problems and issues on the whole coincided, only each side put them in a different order.

Gorbachev's order was: the main aspects of disarmament with a detailed blueprint; settlement of regional conflicts, improving international economic relations, promoting development, overcoming backwardness, poverty, combating mass disease, humanitarian problems, bilateral relations.

Reagan: human rights, regional problems, arms reduction, bilateral relations.

President Reagan explains the relegation of disarmament problems to the last but one place with his usual aphoristic formula: nations mistrust each other not because they are armed; nations arm because they mistrust each other. It therefore follows that one should not hurry with disarmament – as he said, "once born, don't hurry." First it is necessary to surmount the philosophical, fundamental differences that divide societies. And that, in turn, presupposes that the Soviet Union should change according to the recipes Ronald Reagan has been dispensing throughout his eight years in office, and this could be advanced by raising the issue of human rights, where everything is perfect in America and bad in the Soviet Union.

There is a fair bit of cunning in this logic.

G.S. The President's pet phrase could be interpreted differently. For a number of political reasons our societies were for a long time closed to each other. What trust could have existed when we simply did not know each other and had no wish to get to know each other. What has changed in recent years? Problems that are still regarded as controversial and are understood differently persist. Such as human rights. We have begun to discuss them normally and openly. Without regarding it as a personal affront. Problems exist on both sides of the ocean, different ones and interpreted differently, depending on political priorities and the democratic traditions of the two systems. But today we are no longer nervous when the President arranges a special meeting with refuseniks in his residence. After all, that is his way of playing the political game.

Today, I think, the argument about priorities has outlived itself. Noting the differences in approaches, we at the same time recognize the importance of all four items on the agenda of the Moscow summit. Incidentally, what does the saying "Once born, don't hurry" mean?

A.P. It's a clear warning not to hurry.

I looked it up in Dahl's dictionary, but failed to find it. His version is "Birth giving brooks no delay." Its meaning is the exact opposite: don't keep what is ready for too long. I think that applies directly to the questions of nuclear, chemical and other weapons. And where conventional weapons are concerned it is time to get down to implementing the idea of reasonable sufficiency, non-offensive doctrines.

I would not argue with Reagan's favourite maxim about the relationship between mistrust and arms, but in my

opinion he applies it wrongly. As an argument against **complete** disarmament it makes sense: as long as countries do not trust one another, they will not abandon weapons, which are required to guarantee their security. But the question as it now stands is getting rid not of essential weapons, but of the obvious **excess,** many times more than is needed, which is obvious to everyone, and especially getting rid of offensive weapons. Because, if the two superpowers agree to destroy their nuclear might equal to half a million Hiroshimas, another half a million Hiroshimas will still exist.

Sad as it may be, we have become hostages to atomic weapons and will remain so forever. Hostages to nuclear power – nuclear reactors would transform an ordinary bombing or artillery barrage into a nuclear attack. Hostages to the **idea** of nuclear weapons, which will not disappear even if complete nuclear disarmament is achieved, as it could materialize again in case of war; that means that a big war – if one imagines the unimaginable – will be a nuclear war.

ANY WAR IS OUT OF DATE

That being the case, the fears of supporters of the principle of nuclear deterrence can be set at rest – deterrence will always operate. Any war is morally obsolete. That makes it all the more important to defuse the existing Hiroshimas to preclude any accident. "Death by Mistake" sounds a very American title, but it would be an absurd epitaph to inscribe on the grave of the Earth.

Indeed, the primary, urgent and vital tasks to secure the survival of civilization are to reverse the arms race, stop nuclear testing, and halt any future arms race while space weapons, third-generation nuclear weapons and other monstrosities of the 21st century are still unborn.

When there is a fire in the house, the first job is to put it out, not settle quarrels between neighbours, and ensure domestic peace and marital fidelity.

I have a suspicion that disarmament issues were relegated to third place because the U.S. administration is chary of resolving the issue for domestic political reasons. And therefore human rights must provide it with some kind of an alibi.

G.S. We made no mention of a highly important aspect of the dialogue. Changes in the approaches to regional problems have lately become particularly noticeable. That is the area where in the past confrontation with the United States chiefly occurred. We emerged as rivals, which in my opinion only served to worsen an already explosive situation in some parts of the world.

Today in the still very slim Soviet-American portfolio there are the Geneva agreements on Afghanistan. We have to apply this experience to other regions.

To Mars together?

Academician Roald Sagdeyev on the progress of Soviet-American cooperation in space research.

May I remind the reader that a year ago the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. signed an agreement on resuming cooperation in space research. The agreement has proved most fruitful. We are already meeting with our American colleagues to discuss current research. Unfortunately, we have so far failed to pool our efforts in developing instruments compatible with each other's carriers and space vehicles.

The new step forward made in the course of the Moscow Summit makes this form of cooperation a realistic proposition. This means that on future astronomical and interplanetary missions our ships will be equipped with American instruments, and theirs with Soviet ones. For all we know, this may lead to a real consolidation of our efforts, a joint project – say, a flight to Mars. Some other ideas may suggest themselves in the years to come. One thing is certain: we are on our way to a major joint project.

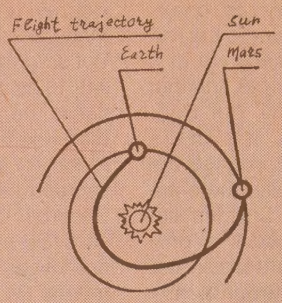


Diagram of flight to Mars

Under the agreements recently signed in Moscow in addition to those signed last year, we shall be able to exchange the findings of Solar system exploration by means of unmanned flights with a view to assessing the prospects for our cooperation in carrying out such flights.

A.P. They say that President Reagan wanted to drive around the St.Daniel Monastery in his car. But when his people addressed themselves with this question to the Patriarchy, they were told, "You have to walk to God."

On the eve of the summit the President made a series of very arrogant speeches. In Moscow too he was unable to refrain from preaching. That was predictable. I would have been surprised if he had abstained. The role of champion of liberty chosen by the President required something of the kind, and melodrama and rhetorical gestures are entirely to his taste. But the philosophical meaning of his visit to the U.S.S.R. is unambiguous. The Kremlin talks, no matter how you look at them, were a striking defeat for the idea of a crusade against non-believers which he had persistently advocated at the beginning of his presidency.

G.S. A couple of years ago I had a conversation with an extremely well-informed man. Harry A. Rositzke was first chief of the Soviet Operations Division of the CIA, had worked at Langley since its foundation in 1970 and is the author of many books. When I asked him what policy he would consider it sensible for the United States to pursue, he replied: "I set forth my views in my last book. It's necessary to stop preaching and sermonizing, and talk as equals with other states about anything; swallow our distaste for socialism and Marxism and trade with anyone; export not free enterprise, but its fruits. Accept changes as facts of life. It is high time we concluded practical agreements on disarmament." I think Reagan the ideologist has travelled a long and hard way to become Reagan the realist.

A.P. The visit passed off with all the appropriate pomp and ceremony. Th President of the United States was re ceived with all the honours usually ac corded to the head of a great country. Bu the President arrived not from a shinin city on a hill, nor on a white charger, nc did the city he was visiting seek to pre sent itself as a shining city on a hi And that was in marked contrast wit the time when President Reagan was beginning his first term in the Whit House.

ON HOLLYWOOD SETTINGS AND POTEMKIN VILLAGES

G.S. Incidentally, shortly before th meeting a London colleague from th Sunday Express phoned me. She wante me to describe how Moscow was prepa ing for the Presidential visit and she wo dered if there were any special decor tions being put up. That question mac me realize that outwardly there were r signs of an impending Presidential vis except perhaps the fact that a fresh coa ing of asphalt on some Moscow stree could help you trace the routes the Pres dential car would take and that scho No. 29 had been repaired and looked u usually clean. But no beds with flowers bloom had sprung up overnight, no ne streets were completed in a matter hours, as had been the case whe another American President was due visit Moscow 14 years ago. We are lear ing to live without putting on a speci show and that is finding its expression such important small things.

A.P. Strange as it may seem, in t past both sides, while fiercely attackir

ch other, were in some respects simi-
: the same ideological intolerance, pre-
mption of one's own perfection and the
ttenness of the other, which ruled out
rmal dialogue and allowed for only one
m of contact: propaganda war.

Arguments boiled down to bickering as
ber-mindedness and self-criticism
re considered out of place.

And any argument from a position of "I
n do no wrong" leads nowhere. In the
al count, it boils down to an argument
s to which is better: Hollywood settings
Potemkin villages.

Fortunately we – not without resis-
nce – are outgrowing the old approach.

G.S. You know, when I watched the
resident walking the length of
.George's Hall towards his partner–op-
nent, his colleague in world affairs, I
ught myself thinking about the two
ain heroes of the normalization of
oviet-American relations, and how dif-
rent were the roads they had travelled
reach the Moscow negotiating table.
r the Soviet side it was along the hard
d of establishing the new thinking, the
arch for acceptable compromises,
ening itself up to the outside world and
ginning to see the outside world itself.
was not an easy admission to make that
the past we had not always used our
portunities to ensure state security by
litical means and had allowed ourse-
es to be drawn into the arms race. Ad-
itting mistakes does not come easily.
nd it has to be said that even today not
verybody likes the idea.

A.P. Perestroika has returned reason
its proper place. Glasnost is gradually
ushing out falsity. It is much more
atural and nobler to fight real shortcom-
ngs of your own in the first place, than to think up nonexistent positive points and play Orwellian games. The debates on human rights become all the simpler, the more Soviet society is democratized and humanized. But then it must be a real discussion, not a distracting ploy. My impression was that the Americans are not yet ready for such an approach. In placing the four items on the agenda in their own order, they in a sense tried to set one against the other. But the task is not to manipulate problems and win propaganda points, but to learn to see each other's real interests, the rational points in the other's ideas and proposals. In short, what is needed is a positive approach, not confrontation.

In the field of humanitarian relations, the task is not convergence, not to convert the other to one's own faith – thousands of years would not be enough for that. Democracy can neither be exported nor imported. It can only be created on the spot with one's own hands. Societies don't change to one's order or to please others. What can bring societies closer while preserving their differences is not pressure, but mutual influence, mutual dependence, cooperation in resolving global problems, recognition of the general criteria of humanity – corresponding to man's needs and the challenges facing mankind.

G.S. Welcoming the Reagans at the Kremlin, Mikhail Gorbachev said that as a result of the continuing Soviet-American dialogue, "the human features of the other nation have become more apparent." That, I would say, is another important aspect of our relations today. Or to be more precise, aspects. I noticed them throughout the summit. For instance, an unexpected stroll of the two leaders on Red Square, which is always overcrowded, the Reagan's unscheduled wish to take a walk down one of Moscow's old streets – the Arbat. And the President's meeting with Moscow University students and writers – all that lent a special colouring to the Moscow meeting.

A.P. I should like to get back to cooperation. Progress in any field, whether fishing, transport, science, or youth exchanges, contains, apart from its concrete significance, a higher meaning as well. A joint expedition to Mars would have a tremendous symbolic effect. But I feel that the main accent in the next few years should be on getting action in the economic sphere. So far it looks as if neither side is ready for that. American business is afraid and has its hands tied by all sorts of political embargoes. The Soviet side has not created the proper conditions for large-scale joint initiatives, and is fettered by bureaucratism. Much more decisive action is needed in this field.

G.S. Indeed, the fact that the volume of trade between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. dropped from 1,500 million rubles in 1986 to 1,200 million in 1987, and that since January 1987 only three joint Soviet-American ventures have been started does not look very promising. I've already mentioned that I think it does absolutely no good when Soviet journalists write about America exclusively in black. Nor do I believe we should go to the other extreme and paint the Moscow summit in rosy colours alone. The fabric of Soviet-American relations so far is not very strong.

So let us try once again to formulate the specific features of the Moscow summit and its results. I've heard someone call it détente-2. Others say a new description is needed. The Special Assistant to Secretary of State Ridgway refused to use the term "a new détente," adding that it was up to the journalists to come up with something. So why don't we try?

A.P. The nature of summits is such that their significance becomes apparent not immediately, but only at the next summit. For instance, Reykjavik proved that Geneva was not just an episode but the beginning of the road. In Washington it became apparent that far from being a failure, Reykjavik had been extremely fruitful. Moscow consolidated what had been achieved in Washington. Now we can see the direction in which things are moving. And that is the chief result.

I hope that the next summit will show that today we are at the **beginning of the end of the cold war.**

G.S. In other words, **normalization?**

A.P. Yes, if the present trend survives the election campaign and change of Presidents, and, of course, if democratization in the Soviet Union continues at the same pace, then we can look forward to not even a cool world, but a pleasantly warm one.

On behalf of the disinherited

"There are a million and a half of us left. If the administration makes no radical changes for the better in its policy towards the American Indian population, we shall presently cease to exist as a people," said Nilak Butler, a member of the delegation from the American Indian Movement which came to Moscow to hand Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan documentary evidence on violations of human rights in the United States.

There were four representatives from the Movement altogether. Three were Indians - Nilak Butler and Russell Redner, members of the Leonard Peltier Defence Committee, and Anthony Gonzalez, head of the San Francisco International Indian Treaty Council, and the fourth was white, Karen Parker, a lawyer. The money to pay for the delegation's trip to Moscow was raised as a result of a campaign organized by Karen Parker.

Said Russell Redner: "Our life is intolerable. Reagan called Russia 'an empire of evil.' But what, in that case, are we to call America, which destroys and humiliates its indigenes – the Indians? Reagan did not receive us at home. He may not receive us here in Moscow, either. But when he starts talking about human rights, the President should recall the 50 million Indians wiped off their ancestors' land."

At a press conference held at the Soviet Peace Committee, representatives from the American Indian Movement were asked: "Will the Summit be of help in securing the release of Leonard Peltier, a fighter for the rights of American Indians?"

"The entire Indian population of the United States ardently hopes that it will," was the reply.

Central Committee motions for the 19th All-Union Party Conference

(Approved by the CC Plenary Meeting, May 23, 1988)

Our country is going through profound revolutionary reforms of historic significance, initiated and organized by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The April 1985 plenary meeting of its Central Committee and its 27th Congress set the Party's course towards accelerated social and economic development, the all-round renewal of Soviet society, and the elevation of socialism to a qualitatively new level. This innovative strategy was deepened and concretized at the January and June 1987 plenary meetings of the central Committee, during the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution, and at the February plenary meeting this year. This laid down the foundations for the theory and scientific policy of restructuring every aspect of life in our society.

The purpose of the restructuing, or perestroika, is fully to reveal the humanitarian nature and constructive vigour of socialism. Attaining this objective calls for the promotion of democracy and openness, along with self-management, radical economic reform, the moral cleansing of society, and releasing the creative potential inherent in the free and all-round development of the individual.

What are the first results of perestroika? What must be done to remove the obstacles, give a new and powerful impulse to the revolutionary process of renewal, and make it irreversible? The answers to these questions, which keenly concern Communists and all Soviet people, must be given by the 19th All-Union Party Conference, which opens in Moscow on June 28, 1988.

The agenda of the conference is as follows: 1) Progress in implementing the decisions of the 27th CPSU Congress, the main results of the first half of the twelfth economic five-year plan period, and the tasks of Party organizations in deepening the process of perestroika; 2) Measures further to democratize the Party and society.

The issues being submitted for the consideration of the conference are of vital significance for the Party and the country. We must give a realistic assessment to what has been done, give it serious critical and self-critical analysis, check how decisions are being carried out, focus on priority issues, sum up positive experience and outline the avenues of further advance. The following motions put forward by the CPSU Central Committee are being proposed as a platform for discussion.

1. Perestroika has produced a fundamentally new ideological and political situation in society. It has become a reality and is gaining in strength, growing in breadth and depth and extending to every stratum and sphere of society. The February 1988 plenary meeting of the Central Committee described the ideological essence of the ongoing processes as a revolution in mentality, as ideological renewal. A salient feature of our time is the appearance of a real pluralism of opinions, open comparison of ideas and interests. Thanks to this, the Soviet people are now in a position more fully to exploit their intellectual and moral potential and join more vigorously in public life.

The platform of perestroika is politically consolidating the working class, farmers, intellectuals – all forces in society. The Soviet people, by their work and social activity, are giving increasingly effective support to the revolutionary changes in the country. This is today's main trend in social development, the most important result of the first stage of perestroika.

At the same time, perestroika is a dialectical process, proceeding as it does through difficulties and the struggle between the old and the new. Survivals of the conservative and bureaucratic mentality have proved especially tenacious. Adherents of dogmatic concepts of socialism are slow to yield. Attempts are being made to preserve the old, pressurizing methods of running the economy and other spheres of life.

Without dealing with these negative phenomena, it is impossible to advance further and accomplish the major tasks of perestroika. We must raise the theoretical level of ideological and political work and deepen the creative discussions on the burning issues of socialism. While backing diversity of views, the Central Committee stresses that discussions can be fertile if they are carried out on the basis and in the name of socialism. They must not lead to political confrontation, to disunity of social forces, because that would complicate the solution of problems vital to our entire society.

This also applies to many sensitive issues of history, interest in which has grown tremendously of late. The Party will consistently conduct its policy of openness and glasnost, of free discussion of problems of the past and the present, for only such a policy promotes the moral improvement of Soviet society and its cleansing of everything that is alien to its humane nature.

We are not indifferent either to the goals and values of socialism, or to the means of attaining them, to the human price that has to be paid for them. It is our Party and civic duty to rehabilitate those who in the past fell victim to unjustified political charges and to illegality.

We need a constantly operating mechanism for comparing views, for criticism and for self-criticism in the Party and in society. The undoubted gains of the policy of openness are to be consolidated and multiplied. With the one-party system which has historically evolved and asserted itself in this country, and which is being closely combined today with processes of democratization, this is a matter of vital importance. A Leninist-type approach is essential here. In condemning factionalism, Lenin was definitively opposed to the persecution of his Party comrades for holding opinions that differed from his own. A constant and constructive political dialogue, the civilized conduct of discussions, wide information available on matters of domestic and foreign policy, and the study and taking account of public opinion must become part and parcel of the Party's life.

2. Matters of economic and social development have featured prominently in the Party's activities since the April 1985 plenary meeting of the Central Committee.

The years of stagnation led the country to the brink of economic crisis. An extensive, wasteful way of running the economy had fully exhausted itself. The structure and technical level of the economy do not conform to modern requirements. Command-administrative methods of management became a serious brake. Production efficiency and living standards ceased to grow. Many social questions were neglected. The finances of the country were seriously disrupted and the sense of responsibility of personnel and labour discipline slackened.

The Party has been faced with a difficult task, one of taking the country out of the doldrums, improving the economic situation, putting development at the service of the people, and working out and implementing a set of long-term measures to speed the scientific, technical and economic advance towards leading positions in these spheres.

As a first step, considerable work has proved necessary to introduce elementary order and tighten up discipline in the national economy, set greater demands on personnel, and remove the more glaring instances of bureaucratic methods standing in the way of people's normal work.

A practical start has been made to implement a new structural policy, with the emphasis on further scientific and technological progress and the modernization of engineering as the basis for raising the technological level of the entire economy. Specific measures of an economic and organizational kind are being taken to raise product quality.

Contrary to the "leftover principle" used in the past in allocating funds for the development of the social sphere, more money is being assigned for housing construction and health care, for the development of public education, the strengthening of the material base of culture, and other social objectives.

The main stress is placed on the development and implementation of a radical reform to ensure the transition from predominantly administrative to economic methods of management, and on increasing the interest of collectives and individual workers in the results of their work. The laws adopted on state enterprise (association), cooperatives, and private operation, marked major milestones along that road. Large-scale work began across the country to transfer enterprises to profit-and-loss accounting, progressive forms of organization and incentives for good work and self-management. These forms are releasing the initiative of work collectives and the spirit of enterprise and prompting people to work to maximum effect, helping extirpate wage-levelling in all forms, and establishing the process of democratization on a material foundation.

The Party set the course towards the full application of the potential of collective and state farms through the development of diverse contract forms and the establishment of a wide network of cooperatives within the framework of existing farms and in conjunction with other enterprises and branches of the economy.

Certainly, two to three years is not long enough to implement radical economic reforms. We are at an early stage, in a sort of transition period. It is only this year that the Law on State Enterprise and other decisions relating to the economic reform have taken effect, and even they are not functioning at full strength, for they were put into effect in the middle of the five-year-plan period, with old prices, in the absence of wholesale trade in the means of production, and in conditions of continuing scarcity of goods. The major programmes of technological progress that have been drawn up and are now in action cannot be expected to bring immediate results.

And, still, positive changes are taking place. The main thing is that we have been able to halt the growth of negative tendencies that threatened to grow into a crisis situation, to reverse these trends and create certain prerequisites for further steady advance.

This is not only a question of raising the rate of industrial output, making full use of fixed assets and improving other quantiative indicators. The important thing is that these rates have been achieved on a sounder economic basis. Last year, for the first time the entire increment in the national income was obtained through greater labour productivity. The effort to develop new types of modern equipment and improved production techniques have already brought encouraging results. There has been some increase in agricultural output.

The situation in the social sphere has changed too. Over the past two years the average monthly wages of industrial and office workers have gone up by almost 6 per cent, and collective farmers' pay, by 8.9 per cent. The amount of housing annually completed for tenancy, as compared with the eleventh five-year plan, has increased by 15 million square metres. The death rate has declined and the birth rate has risen, with the measures against alcoholism and drinking contributing to this in no small degree.

Positive results are here to see, but they do not give grounds for speaking of a radical change for the better in the country's social and economic development. The economic structure is still too cumbersome and of a manifestly wasteful character. Targets for national income growth and resource saving are not being met. Engineering is developing more slowly than was planned. There is still a shortage of high-quality electronic goods, and modern structural materials.

Especially intolerable are failures to meet assignments for the priority growth of consumer goods output. Difficulties remain in food supplies for the population. Targets for increasing the output and raising the quality of consumer goods, and raising goods turnover, have not been met. Commodity-money imbalances, and the deficit of the state budget are having an adverse effect on current production and the course of the reform itself.

The opportunities that opened up with the start of the reform are being put to obviously inadequate use. The conference is to look into the reasons for that. Evidently, though it is certainly difficult to change over from one system of economic management to another, many of the problems derive from the conservative and backward mentality of some of our economic executives and, indeed, whole collectives, from a striving to cling to habitual ways and methods, and live and work in the old way.

One cannot fail to see that measures to implement the economic reform are to a considerable extent being paralyzed by the bureaucratic stance of some ministries and departments, of economic bodies. In many instances, the old ways of administrative diktat are being preserved under the guise of state-placed orders, economic norms and other new methods of management. Perestroika at the level of the ministries responsible for the different industries is clearly lagging behind perestroika at enterprises. In view of this, we must uncompromisingly condemn moves to distort the essence of the economic reform and directly or indirectly undermine the Law on Enterprises.

We have to tackle question of such magnitude as the promotion of economic competition as an antidote to monopolistic attitudes, stagnation and conservatism.

In the context of this situation, the activities of the U.S.S.R. State Planning Committee, the U.S.S.R. State Committee for Material and Technical Supplies, the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Finance, industrial ministries and Union departments, and economic bodies in republics, enterprises and organizations, must be analyzed and assessed. This is especially important in view of the forthcoming transfer of enterprises in all branches to cost-accounting and self-financing. We must draw lessons from the initial stage of perestroika to accelerate the solution of problems that determine the full application of the principles of the economic reform. We must push along the transition to wholesale trade in the means of production, take steps to improve the credit and finance system, and carefully prepare and conduct in good time a reform of prices and pricing. Without that, it will be impossible to introduce really full cost-accounting at enterprises, ensure full autonomy for work collectives, develop the cooperative movement, and raise the efficiency of the economy and ultimately the living standards. It should also be stressed that the revision of retail prices must be carried through without detriment to the living standards of the population.

An effective social policy is one of the chief priorities in the Party's activity. This is why it is vital to highlight the social purport of economic development when elaborating the 13th five-year plan. Special attention should be given to meeting the Soviet people's need for quality foodstuffs promptly. It is also important that the market should get a sufficient amount and a wide range of quality consumer goods, that a modern sphere of services be created and housing construction accelerated, and that existing public health and education programmes should succeed.

One of the main tasks is to step up efforts to protect the environment and radically improve the ecological situation in the country.

As decided by the 27th CPSU Congress, the number-one production task is the programme for the accelerated development of key branches of the mechanical engineering industry, electronics, instrument making, and machine tool construction. Next year we must begin more resolutely and radically changing structural policy in the field of production and investment, and taking rigorous economizing and resource-saving measures.

It is quite possible to reach the targets set in the 12th five-year plan and raise our economic and social sphere to a qualitatively new level. This is borne out by the fact that hundreds and even thousands of Soviet enterprises have considerably raised labour productivity, and that the goods they produce under the new conditions are on a par with the world's best. Not only individual enterprises and associations, but whole industries, are keeping the pace set as regards all the indicators. Thanks to better management, certain regions and republics have performed better than the country's average with regard to food supplies and providing goods and services to the public. The paramount task for all economic executives and all work collectives is to follow the example of advanced enterprises, use their experience, eradicate parasitical attitudes, and show their own initiative.

3. Restructuring should provide for the all-round development and maximum exploitation of the intellectual and spiritual potential which the advance of science, education, and culture promises.

The Party's economic and social strategy is based on speeding up scientific and technological progress and, in particular, mastering its present achievements – developing advanced technologies such as microelectronics, robotics, instrument-making, information science, biotechnology – as well as the development of materials with preset qualities, etc.

Positive changes are occurring in the development of Soviet science and technology. Higher standards are being applied to the technological level of products. The terms for introducing up-to-date items into production have been reduced. The network of technological research organizations has become more flexible. There have appeared fundamentally new structural units: inter-sectoral technological research complexes, engineering centres, and task forces. More than 500 research and production associations have been established. Investments in R&D have grown. It is also important that research organizations are becoming an integral part of the system of cost-accounting.

But no substantial changes have taken place in scientific and technological progress. Effective mechanisms have yet to be found for making work collectives interested in it. The material base of Soviet science continues to lag behind. Many executives still consider only the benefits of the moment and rely entirely on higher-ranking bodies.

To influence technological progress we must first of all restructure the economic mechanism which should ensure constant improvements in production and keep product quality at world-beating levels.

The imperative of the day is more resolute measures to improve management and remove departmental barriers hindering scientific and technological progress. Inter-sectoral associations that are not directly subordinate to ministries are one of the new organizational forms. They make it possible to ensure a strict sequence between R&D, investment, production, marketing, and servicing. Work collectives will be able more promptly to renew equipment and technology without any delays and departmental coordinations.

Questions of scientific and technological progress must be viewed in the general context of social development. The social impact of large-scale projects must be carefully studied if we

re to avoid grave ecological and moral consequences. The latter must be reduced to a minimum or eliminated altogether.

The new tasks facing society at the present stage considerably raise the role of science in all processes of restructuring. Our society has reached a stage where a major breakthrough is required in all the natural, technical, and social sciences. The U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences is expected to make a growing contribution to this.

Socialism today cannot develop successfully without progress in science and technology. And this progress coupled with socialism becomes a mighty lever for social rejuvenation and advance.

The humanist principles of our policy are aimed at ensuring the spiritual progress of society and boosting cultural and educational standards. Much attention has in the last three years been paid to the development of education at all stages and levels. The problems involved in restructuring the national education system were examined at the February 1988 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee. Our higher and secondary schools lag far behind the needs of the time and scientific, technological, and cultural progress. Vigorous efforts by all of society are needed to ensure qualitative changes in its development.

In the course of restructuring increasingly favourable conditions are being created for Soviet culture to advance, for people to grow morally and intellectually, for talents and gifts to win through and for civic spirit to prevail. Intellectuals are making a substantial contribution to the accomplishment of these tasks. Already existing and newly established unions of art workers and associations have stepped up their activity. The artist's responsibility for the country's future has assumed even greater importance than before.

4. The CPSU's policy of restructuring and speeding up the country's socio-economic development has from the outset been linked with the democratization of Soviet society and the assertion of socialist self-government by the people. Very important changes have taken place in this respect. Thanks to truthfulness, openness, and greater criticism and self-criticism, the political life has become more vigorous, democratic processes are being launched in production management, and resolute steps are being taken to combat outdated structures and inertia. But what has been done up to now is only a prelude to the accomplishment of an extremely significant and complex task – the profound and all-round democratization of the Party and society.

An unbiased analysis of our achievements in the economic, social, and cultural spheres over the last three years and of the problems emerging in the course of restructuring testifies to the need to reform the Soviet political system. The aim is really to attract broad sections of the population into running all state and public affairs and to complete the formation of a socialist state ruled by law.

It is vital to strengthen and develop the fundamental principles of socialist statehood born of the October Revolution. These principles and, in particular, the power of the people with the Communist Party in the vanguard, are an indispensable condition for our country's future social progress. Restructuring is called upon to relieve the Soviet political system of all that is linked with the consequences of the personality cult, administrative regimentation, red tape, the alienation of working people from government, and deviations from the Leninist norms of Party and state life. The political system should be dynamic and capable of timely renewal, with due regard for changing conditions in domestic and international life.

5. Restructuring presents in a new light the CPSU's role as the guiding and organizing force in Soviet society.

The CPSU Central Committee proceeds from the Leninist tenet of the Party as the political vanguard of the working class and all working people. Guided by Marxist-Leninist doctrine, the Party is called upon to work out a theory and strategy of social development, home and foreign policy, and an ideology of socialist rejuvenation. It must also carry out political and organizational work among the people and properly educate and deploy personnel.

The Party acted in this very way in Lenin's lifetime and under Lenin's leadership. But after Lenin's death, deviations from Leninist principles began. The freedom of discussion traditional in the Party was curtailed. The foundations of collective leadership and inner-Party democracy were violated. This vicious practice persisted to some extent or other in the years of stagnation. The absence of time limits for terms of elective office prevented the natural rotation of personnel. Some executives started to believe that they had been appointed to their posts for life. They considered themselves infallible, abused power, and neglected the interests of rank-and-file Party members and working people.

Such a situation gravely affected the activity of the CPSU Central Committee, the government, local Party organizations, and of all Communists. Party bodies increasingly tackled current economic and administrative management problems, in this way replacing the Soviets and other state bodies. This had an adverse effect on the exercise of the Party's basic functions, weakened its political and ideological influence, and exacerbated many problems of social development.

The Party had the courage to critically examine the situation. It has launched perestroika and is step by step transforming itself and internal Party life. One of the most urgent tasks is to establish the political mechanisms and guarantees that would in the future exclude possibilities of violating the Leninist principles of Party leadership.

Taking account of the views expressed at Party meetings, in work collectives and in the press, the CPSU Central Committee believes it expedient to consider the following suggestions during the conference.

To restore in full measure the Leninist concept of democratic centralism, in accordance with which freedom of debates should be ensured at the stage when issues are discussed, and concerted action ensured after a decision has been passed by a majority.

To proceed in the relationship between the Party and the state from the Leninist principles of a precise delimitation of their functions. All Party organizations should act in compliance with the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. and with Soviet laws. Party committees should not pass resolutions addressing direct instructions to state and economic bodies, as well as to public organizations. The CPSU shall steer its political course via Communists working in bodies of state authority and in all spheres of society's life.

Proceeding from the tasks of the CPSU as the political vanguard and from deep-going changes in society, the activities of primary Party organizations should be radically restructured. While remaining the political nucleus of each collective, they should not supplant work collectives and their bodies in discharging the functions provided for under the Law on State Enterprise, the Law on Cooperation and other legislative acts. Acting primarily via Communists and working in the midst of the people, Party organizations should ensure that every work collective copes in full with the functions entrusted to it, and exercises its democratic rights.

The role of Party meetings, Party committees and each individual Communist in implementing the decisions of the Party should be reconsidered from this standpoint. The atmosphere of openness, debate, criticism and self-criticism, Party comradeship and discipline, collectivism and personal responsibility should be restored in full measure. Current developments in the life of Party organizations are proceeding in precisely this direction. They should be supported and developed in every way.

Questions of the qualitative composition of the Party's ranks and the performance by Communists of their vanguard role are being widely discussed in the Party and society. In this connection the view is being expressed that the practice of regulating the growth of the Party's ranks by "order" runs counter to the real requirements of the development of the Party itself and of the whole of society.

The common view is that demands on those joining the Party should be made considerably more stringent so that really worthy people with high political, moral and business qualities, committed fighters for the programme goals of the Party, can join its ranks. It is essential that the opinion of the work collective concerned be taken into consideration.

To consider during the conference the expediency of conducting, in the period preceding the next CPSU congress, discussions to assess the social and political calibre of each Communist, this being an effective means of purifying and strengthening the Party. The discussion of Communists' work at open meetings of Party organizations shall make them more active and increase their personal contribution to the social life of their collective and the cause of perestroika.

In the light of the experience accumulated since the January (1987) plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, changes should be made in the procedure for forming elected Party bodies. Genuine competition, wide-scale discussion of candidates, and voting by secret ballot should become the norm. What matters here is not the post one occupies, but one's ideological, moral and business qualities, one's political prestige and one's active stance in promoting perestroika. During elections to all Party committees, Communists shall have the right to nominate a number of candidates exceeding that of the committee's membership.

Such a procedure for nominating, discussing and electing Party committee membes and secretaries could be applied to the process of forming party bodies, all the way from district and city Party committees to the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of the union republics and the CPSU Central Committee.

All Party committees, starting at district and city level, shall be elected for a standard term of 5 years. At the same time a Communist shall not hold an elected post in the CPSU for more than two successive terms. Election for a third successive term shall be possible only on the initiative of Communists and shall require a preliminary decision on admission to the elections. Such a decision shall be passed by no less than three quarters of the membership of the Party committee concerned. The voting shall be by secret ballot.

Special responsibility in affirming the Party as the political vanguard rests with the CPSU Central Committee. It should in every way develop and consolidate the principles of collective leadership in its work so that all members of the Central Committee can participate in resolving the principal questions relating to the political line of the Party on a basis of wide-scale discussion. The conference is to consider possible suggestions concerning new forms of collective work by Central Committee members between plenary meetings. All this should eventually be directed towards enhancing the role of the Party's Central Committee.

To provide for the possibility of partially replacing Central Committee members between congresses and ensuring a continuing influx of fresh forces. Decisions on this score should be taken by a qualified majority. Voting should be by secret ballot.

To introduce the necessary structural and personnel changes in the Party with due account taken of the Party's growing role as the political vanguard and bearing in mind the delimitation of the functions of party committees from those of state and economic bodies. The principle of strict subordination and accountability of Party functionaries to elected party bodies should be followed, while bureaucracy, communist complacency and unwarranted secrecy in Party life should be resolutely fought.

The Party's personnel policy needs to be substantially renewed in the conditions of democratization. A formal approach to the selection and distribution of cadres is becoming outdated. The organization of cadre training and retraining, cadre education and the recommendation of both Communists and non-Party people to leading posts should be the principal method of work of Party committees. Election results should determine the final settlement of questions of personnel.

It is expedient to consider during the conference the question of improving control and auditing work in the Party. At present the Party has the Central Auditing Commission of the CPSU and the Party Control Committee under the CPSU Central Committee. The suggestion is made that there should be one body in the future which should be elected by the Party congress to control the observance by Communists of the demands of Party discipline and CPSU Rules and monitor the financial and economic activity of Party bodies.

All these proposals should be directed towards the consistent observance of the democratic principles of Party life, enhance the initiative of the Party and its ability to lead the process of revolutionary renewal of Soviet society, and set the pace for perestroika.

6. The principal guideline in making our society and state more democratic is the restoration in full measure of the role and powers of the Soviets of People's Deputies as plenipotentiary bodies of popular representation.

Lenin discovered in the Soviets, born of the experience of the revolutions in Russia, a political form that accords with the nature of socialism. As representative bodies of power and mass public organizations, the Soviets organically combine the principles of statehood and self-government. Having an immense democratic potential, they have demonstrated their viability and corroborated the correctness of Lenin's discovery.

At the same time we notice serious shortcomings in the work of the Soviets and the dissatisfaction of the working people with their performance. As a result of known distortions, the rights and powers of the representative bodies have been curtailed, and they remain under unwarranted tutelage from Party committees. In many cases ministries and departments decide matters of economic and social development over their heads. Not infrequently executive committees and officials employed by them usurp the functions of the Soviets, while deputies are left to sanction prearranged decisions. It is vital to change this situation radically and reinstate the Soviets to their real governing powers by turning over to them all specific questions of state, economic, social and cultural life for consideration and decision.

The material and financial possibilities of local Soviets should be substantially expanded. It is important to ensure the formation of local budgets on the basis of long-term norms with the emphasis primarily on augmenting the budget receipts of local Soviets from enterprises and economic organizations located

on their respective territories. Local bodies of state authority should be made fully responsible for and independent in deciding matters relating to the development of their respective territories. Broad use should be made of cost-accounting, and contractual and other forms of relations with enterprises and organizations, no matter to whom the latter are subordinated. Consistent efforts should be made to preclude intervention by higher bodies of state authority and management agencies in the process of making decisions within the competence of local Soviets lower down the line, and to preclude numerous unnecessary coordinations.

The correct relationship between local Soviets and councils of work collectives acquires special importance. The basic premise here is that a Soviet of People's Deputies coordinates the drafting and implementation of plans for the social development of enterprises, collective and state farms, the promotion of democratic principles in production management, and protects the interests of the population from what Lenin described as excessive departmental zeal.

Changes in the functions of the Soviets and the need for a more careful and competent study of certain questions shall make it essential to extend the duration of their sessions. A number of deputies should be relieved, either for the entire duration of their term or periodically, from their official and production duties so that they can work in the Soviets, on standing commissions and in constituencies.

The Soviets should work in an atmosphere of the greatest possible openness. Members of the general public and media representatives should be free to attend their meetings, and the electors and the public should be kept systematically informed of the results of their work.

The genuine primacy of Soviets over executive bodies should be ensured. It should be stipulated that officials employed by executive bodies accountable to a given Soviet cannot simultaneously be deputies to that Soviet. This rule should be applied to persons making up the Councils of Ministers of the republics and, with only a few exceptions, to members of the Union government, as well as to judges, state arbiters and procurators. Officials should be appointed to executive bodies by the Soviets, and only as a rule after standing commissions have made corresponding decisions to this effect.

Local Soviets (with the exception of those at village and settlement levels) should establish presidiums that could concern themselves with organizing deputies' work, coordinating the activities of standing commissions and deputies' groups and, between sessions, supervising the work carried out by executive committees. It is expedient to concentrate the attention of executive committees on economic, administrative and executive functions.

To ensure greater continuity and efficiency on the part of deputies, the term of all Soviets of People's Deputies in the country should be fixed at five years.

The transfer of power in its entirety to the Soviets, from the bottom to the top, presupposes that the role of the country's supreme body of authority should radically increase. In its structure and activities, due account should be taken of the accumulated experience of the functioning of the Soviet political system, including the procedure for the work of Soviets' congresses and of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. – a practice that took shape under Lenin. Various versions and suggestions are possible here. Some of them have already been put forward during the current debates: on extending the duration of sessions of the supreme body of authority; on a precise delimitation of powers and making up for the lack of functional individuality of the chambers; on electing a number of deputies directly from public organizations that make up the political system of our society, and so on.

To observe the Leninist principles of state life, a rule shall be introduced according to which no one may hold an elective government post for more than two successive terms, i.e., for ten years. Election for a third successive term can occur on the deputies' initiative, with the obligatory preliminary decision to allow the nominee to run for election taken by no less than 75 per cent of deputies of the Soviet concerned by secret ballot.

The Constitutional premise shall be strictly observed that one person may not be deputy to more than two Soviets at a time.

The necessity to enhance dramatically the role of Soviets requires an electoral system reform to guarantee the free nomination of candidates, and an extensive and many-sided discussion of the nominees at public meetings and in the mass media.

Elections must naturally proceed from the will of the voters, who give preference to principled, efficient and energetic persons capable of being worthy representatives of the people in Soviet state bodies and expressing the whole range of the people's social, ethnical and occupational interests.

The new conditions enhance the role of the Soviet government, the supreme executive and administrative state body, in exercising home and foreign policies, governing the country, elaborating and implementing plans and long-term programmes for economic, social and cultural development.

The conference shall pay due attention to the restructuring of the state management system, with account for the democratic change under way in Soviet society, and the radical economic reform. The formation of economic, organizational and legal conditions for efficient performance by all institutions and organizations shall become the main purport of the work of state bodies. The structure of the apparatus and the number of its officials must be made to correspond with those functions, with unnecessary sections abolished. The performance of managerial bodies needs strict supervision by Soviets, the People's Control and the public to do away with management pressure and command, the bureaucratic spirit and red tape. Wide publicity and openness in management are also highly effective here.

Perestroika and democratic change in Soviet society requires the Leninist principles of organizing inspections to be fully implemented, to become a genuine, truly efficient vehicle of direct and immediate participation by workers, peasants, intellectuals and representatives of all other social strata in the running of state and social affairs.

It seems expedient, in this connection, to set up a unified system of state and public inspection under elective ruling bodies. Supported by its groups in work collectives and territorial units, such a system can largely promote the implementation of current national objectives.

7. The restructuring of the political system requires urgent measures to be discussed and adopted to further improve the Soviet federation. The brilliant results of the Leninist nationalities policy over the 70 years of Soviet power are evident to all. We have done tremendous, historic work to overcome interethnic strife, guarantee the right of nations to self-determination, revive and encourage ethnic cultures, and boost the progress of what used to be backward non-Russian peripheries. A unified national economic complex has taken shape and functions successfully as the material basis for the unity of Soviet peoples.

Practice has shown, at the same time, that interethnic relations require constant attention, as does the progress of every nationality and ethnic group. A political line to satisfy all ethnic communities' interests and promote their rapprochement and

mutual aid, along with an internationalist ideology incompatible with nationalism and chauvinism, provide the basis for the solution of interethnic issues.

All Soviet constituent republics and autonomous units have enhanced their economic, cultural and manpower potential. Ethnic awareness is duly growing. The independence of constituent and autonomous republics and other ethnic administrative units must go hand-in-hand with their responsibility for national state interests. Herein lies the way to further progress for ethnic communities, to closer friendship between them, and the consolidation of Soviet society. Herein is our strength and an earnest of prosperity for the Soviet Union as a whole and for each ethnic entity.

Decentralization and the transfer of as many managerial duties as possible to local bodies fully concern every form of Soviet ethnic entities' statehood and autonomy, with strict observance of the U.S.S.R. Constitution's premises and the Soviet legislation, which guarantee the rights of constituent and autonomous republics, autonomous regions and areas.

Political institutions whose duty it is to spotlight ethnic interests and bring them into mutual accord shall become more active. This is an imperative of the day.

Ethnic entities which have no statehood and no territorial units of their own are entitled to more possibilities of expressing and satisfying their demands.

Interethnic issues shall be settled on the basis of genuine democracy, in the spirit of perestroika. Such is the opinion of the CPSU Central Committee. Whatever their ethnic background, Communists have always been the heart and cementing force of the great socialist union of Soviet peoples – a sublime and responsible mission, which will remain just as vital in the future.

8. Democratic change in Soviet society will be crowned by the formation of the socialist state ruled by law as a form of organization and exercising political power that fully corresponds to socialism and socialist democracy. Legality, supreme and triumphant, which expresses the people's will, is the pivot of such a state. State and Party bodies, mass organizations, work collectives and all office-holders and private individuals shall proceed from strictly observed legality in all their actions.

Adding the concept "ruled by law" to the characteristics of our state, which belongs to the whole people, it should be emphasized once again that the state is responsible to its citizens, just as they are responsible to the state. Constant concern for the strengthening of the guarantees of Soviet citizens' rights and freedoms is the duty of the state. The latter premise pertains to the further extension of social rights (to work, leisure, education, health protection, social security, etc.), whose harbinger the Soviet Union has been for the whole world. It also implies material and juridical conditions for the exercise of Constitutional freedoms (freedom of speech, the press, conscience, assembly, meetings, street processions and demonstrations, etc.) and firmer guarantees of personal rights, such as the inviolability of the individual and the home, and the privacy of correspondence and telephone conversations.

We must make further headway along these lines to implement all the intrinsic potential of socialist society and eradicate the distortions and deformations we owe to deviations from the Leninist principles of statehood and to authoritarian methods of government alien to the socialist system.

With this end in view, a deep-going juridical reform is necessary. It is called upon radically to improve the work of all bodies whose duty it is to consolidate legality and protect the democratic principles of statehood, citizens' rights and freedoms. The first priorities of that reform include the dramatic enhancement of the role of justice and the strict observance of democratic principles in court procedure, of contestation in the judicial process, of the principle of equality of the parties, of publicity and presumption of innocence. There is a noteworthy proposal to increase the number of people's assessors for especially important cases.

The procurator's offices need new work patterns, which would correspond to Leninist concepts – efficiently to observe the unified application of laws, firmly protect Soviet citizens' rights and interests, and safeguard the observance of state and social discipline. Judges, public prosecutors and investigators shall have guarantees against any pressure or interference in their work. They are subordinate to the law and the law alone.

Legality will also be strengthened by a resolute increase in the militia's responsibility for combating crime and misdemeanours, by increasing the competence of state arbitration bodies and encouraging the activities of the Bar. Juridical services in the national economy require major improvements, as does the organization of universal legal education.

The improvement and codification of Soviet legislation demands a vast and concerted effort. On the one hand, outdated laws and numerous departmental instructions running counter to the demands of economic and political reforms have become part and parcel of the braking mechanism and have to be cancelled. On the other, we need a set of new laws to meet the requirements of society, protect the interests of the people, their collectives and organizations. To update Soviet legislation, we must firmly adhere to the following principle: everything is permissible unless prohibited by the law.

9. For the political system of socialism to function normally it must rely on a ramified network of public organizations which will express and satisfy the interests of various social, professional and age brackets.

The trade unions, the Komsomol, cooperatives and other public organizations, research associations and artistic unions are called upon to contribute vigorously to perestroika in every sphere, restructure themselves and reassess their standing in society and the role they play, and tap their potential to the full in the new conditions.

Perestroika has brought into existence women's and veterans' associations, the Soviet Culture Foundation and the Children's Fund and many bodies of public initiative. These have come as an expression of the working people's patriotic feelings, of their desire to contribute immediately to the revolutionary renewal of society, ensure broader access to the values of national and world cultures, improve the quality of life and protect the environment and historical monuments.

Talking of public organizations, we cannot but see that formalist and bureaucratic attitudes are still there. Attempts have been made to limit the independence of such organizations and order them about. There are efforts to make public organizations into state-run bodies and overstaff them. This is something that destroys public initiative.

The main avenue of progress for public organizations is creative initiative on the part of rank-and-file people and the encouragement of self-government. As more democracy is introduced inside public organizations, steps should be devised to give them a bigger say in the political process. They should use their right to initiate bills, send representatives to the bodies of power, be partners to the state in pursuing social programmes, and resolving problems of housing construction, health care, labour, social security, education, leisure, the provision of amenities, trade, day-to-day life, etc.

There is a need to formulate immediately a legal basis for the operation of public organizations, voluntary societies and independent associations. The political criterion to go by is that any public activity should be recognized as long as it remains within the Constitution and does not jeopardize the progress of our Soviet socialist society.

10. Perestroika has become a positive factor worldwide; therefore it needed such a foreign policy as would adequately express its humanist essence, call for more democracy in our international ties and for a new role for our country in the international division of labour.

A critical analysis of the past has been made to show that our foreign policy, too, has not escaped dogmatic and subjective attitudes. It trailed behind fundamental changes occurring in the world and missed new opportunities to reduce tensions and en-

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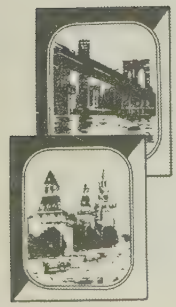

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hance understanding among nations. In our bid for military-strategic parity, we sometimes failed to use the opportunities available to attain security for our nation by political means and, as a result, allowed ourselves to be lured into an arms race, which could not but affect our country's social and economic progress and its position on the international scene.

The foreign policy of perestroika relies on a new mode of thinking, one that is consistent and based on research, and free of historically hackneyed stereotypes. The new mode of thinking reflects the realities of the modern world, versatile and controversial as it is, a world that questions the very survival of humanity and yet contains a formidable potential for coexistence, cooperation and for political solutions to urgent issues.

The new political thinking has made it possible to advance a number of major ideas that have won over an alarmed world. The chief of these are the programme for the stage-by-stage elimination of nuclear weapons by the year 2000, a system of comprehensive security, freedom of choice, a balance of interests, a "common European home," a programme to overhaul relations in Asia and the Pacific, defence sufficiency and a non-offensive doctrine, international economic security, the buildup of national and regional security through arms cuts, readiness mutually to put an end to the presence of foreign troops and bases in alien territory, confidence-building measures, and an idea for direct involvement of the autority of science in world politics.

Such is our creed in foreign policy. We have announced it without imposing any conditions or dogmas on anyone. We have announced it, inviting everybody to participate in our joint reflection and quest, and do it on the basis of national and world interests.

In disarmament, we have offered far-reaching decisions and shown readiness to major compromises. This has enabled such significant breakthroughs to happen as the Geneva summit and, especially, the Reykjavik summit. These two meetings broke the deadlock on the process of negotiation and made a substantial impact on the entire international climate.

The whole style of our foreign policy has changed. The distinguishing feature is dialogue. There is an unprecedented intensity of contacts at leadership level with the outside world, as represented by heads of state and ordinary citizens. This has signified a "fresh discovery" of the Soviet Union. And for us feedback, a chance to know and better understand the world and correspondingly build our policy, furthering the formation of civilized international relations.

The priority trend is with the socialist countries. Together with our friends we have set about a comradely clean-out of the encrustations of formal attitudes and ostentation, and in action have linked the principles of equity, independence and non-interference with the objective reality of the multitude of national forms in socialist society. Our internationalist contacts are built on a basis of mutual benefit, a balance of interests, common responsibility for the destinies and prestige of socialism, and the strengthening of its role in world development.

Over the years of perestroika relations have been improved or inaugurated with a large number of states, both neighbouring and remote. And with none have relations been marred.

We have stated anew our interrelations with such eminent forces influencing the world process as, among others, the Communist, Social Democratic and other political parties; the non-aligned movement; intellectual quarters embodying the authority of science and culture.

Events have shown that the new political outlook correctly reflects the urgent requirements and imperatives of the modern world. It has evoked hope, opened the road to a major breakthrough in human awareness, adding to the weight of public opinion in the world.

The new outlook in international politics has been crowned with major practical achievements: the INF treaty was signed and the Geneva accords have initiated the withdrawal of our troops from Afghanistan.

The definite improvement in Soviet-American relations, symbolized by the summit meetings, gives grounds to reckon on a fundamental turn towards eradicating the nuclear threat. The multilateral process of negotiations which we have actively promoted is bringing near a ban on chemical weapons and opening up an opportunity to ease the dangerous confrontation between the two most mighty military alliances, the North Atlantic Treaty and the Warsaw Treaty Organization, and reduce conventional forces and armaments in Europe.

We are aware of the war danger inherent in the very nature of imperialism. Soviet defence concept takes this into account. From now on it will emphasize the qualitative factor as regards both combat equipment and personnel. The effect of modern world realities and the likely modifications of the war-causing factors give us grounds to presume that the emphasis in the effort for international security will be shifted from the sphere of the correlation between military potentials to that of politics, with primacy of law, human morality and the fulfilment of international obligations.

The radical economimc reform and our new approach to foreign economic ties have produced the first essential shoots for the more efficient involvement of our country in the world economy.

The three years of perestroika have allowed us to answer the paramount question worrying our people and the nations of the world: has the war threat diminished? Yes, certainly. The direct threat of a war involving the major powers has diminished. The international position of the Soviet Union has markedly improved, and through heightened trust in our country rather than an increase in might. The world situation has acquired greater stability and predictability. More real is the prospect of curbing the arms race with all its consequences. The burden of military expenditure is more likely to diminish.

An opportunity has opened up to offset the threat to peace on a broader social and political basis than ever. A chance to lay the ground and have global problems resolved in joint efforts by the world community. The CPSU will actively and persistently act for these goals.

* * *

The path to a brand new state of society and a new face for socialism lies through revolutionary restructuring and democratization in the ideological, political, economic and social spheres, and through a reform of the political system.

We must restore in full the principles of scientific socialism under which man becomes – in actual fact, not in words – the main factor in material and cultural development.

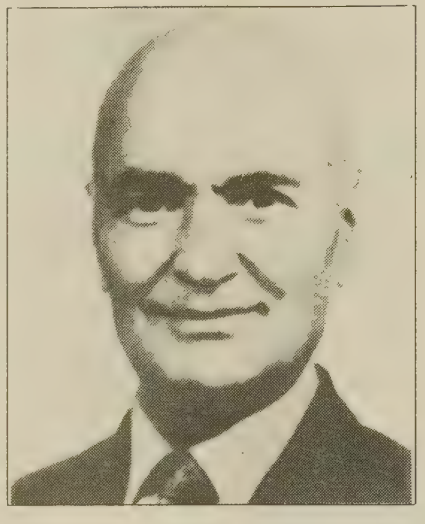
The Party will build its policies with a distinct orientation towards the humanitarian principles and goals of socialism, and seek to achieve them by humanitarian and democratic means.

Naturally, real life and the dialectics of social development will add plenty of new aspects to current ideas about the ways to socialist reforms, allowing us to clarify and enrich them. Several questions will require amendments to the U.S.S.R. Constitution and legislation, and some new decisions are to be adopted at the Party congress level.

Advancing these considerations for discussion, the CPSU Central Committee anticipates active participation by Communists and all working people. This will enable the 19th national Party conference to adopt well-considered measures the realization of which will resolutely speed up progress and make revolutionary perestroika irreversible.

We are taking a difficult test

On May 26 ***Mohammad Hassan Sharq*** *was appointed Afghanistan's new Prime Minister, and he will now form the new government of the Republic. The new Afghan Prime Minister granted an interview to our special correspondent Lev Yelin.*



On the day Mohammad Hassan Sharq received me in Gulkhan Palace in Kabul he was still deputy Prime Minister in charge of the government committee for returnee affairs. Reports of his appointment to the new post came in several days later when I had left Afghanistan. Here is a record of my conversation with Dr Sharq, one of the most well-known and respected people in Afghanistan. "I come from the province of Farah, from Anardarah district on the border with Iran. The people of Anardarah are traders but my father was not a merchant. I was born into an ordinary family of modest means. In 1940 I finished high school and went to Kabul where I enrolled in an army school, where they taught to tend horses. Six months later I went on to an army medical school finishing it in 1942 as a sergeant – a rank I'm still proud of. Subsequently I graduated from Kabul University's Medical School and got my army surgeon's diploma in 1953.

"I was at the University at the time the Students' Union was formed to fight against the absolute power of the King. I joined the Union and was subsequently arrested on several occasions and jailed. At the time I met Mohammad Daud, a cousin of the King, who greatly impressed me. In 1953 he became Prime Minister and invited me to work as head of his Office. It was at that time that I began to take an interest in the affairs of ethnic groups living in Afghanistan.

"I am quite certain that one day history will put everything in its place and everyone will see that Daud Khan was a true friend of the U.S.S.R., and that the Americans were pressing for his downfall.

"In 1963 Mohammad Daud resigned and I was among the first to follow suit. For ten years we and our associates took no part in running the country. We thought of ways of changing the regime and improving the lot of the people. On June 17, 1973 at two a.m. the young patriots staged a coup and toppled the monarchy, Mohammad Daud became President and Prime Minister. I became deputy Prime Minister. At the time I was also secretary of the Central Committee of the Republican Party.

"We ran the country for five years. On five occasions reactionary Islamic parties tried to unseat us and failed. Some of them fled to Pakistan. They failed to instigate a rebellion against us. The Afghan people never believed their claim that we were infidels opposed to Islam. Later on differences arose among us and they led to a split. Attempts were made to provoke a quarrel between myself and Mohammad Daud, and rumours were spread of rivalry between us. But I was never one to fight for high office, because that sort of fight runs counter to the interests of the people. Mohammad Daud asked me one day whether I would agree to take a different job. I agreed and was appointed ambassador to Japan, where I spent 11 months.

"On April 27, 1978, the April revolution took place. I was recalled from Japan. I left immediately, although I knew that some members of the new government were opposed to me. I decided that at that moment in the life of my country I had no right to be away from home. I never said what they wanted me to say. I did not blame Daud Khan. They tried to punish me. I don't wish to recall what happened then. Following the arrival of Soviet troops, I was again invited to take a government post, and I worked as my country's ambassador to India for six and a half years. When I returned I waited for a new appointment for some time and over the past year and a half I have been deputy Prime Minister."

Through these 18 months you have been in charge of refugee affairs. How do you assess prospects for resolving the problem, now that the Geneva Accords have come into force?

"For a start, let me name the factors that led to the appearance of great numbers of refugees. First of all, they did not accept the new ideology and the new state system. Secondly, there were the hostilities, and a series of injustices committed at the first stage of the revolution, and thirdly, there was the powerful propaganda campaign launched by the counter-revolutionaries to persuade Afghans that they would be able to live comfortably abroad, draw welfare grants and not have to work.

"It must be borne in mind that most Afghans in exile were influenced by this campaign, and negative attitudes toward our state and government were inculcated in them. Moreover, many Afghans forgot how to work for a living in exile and experience confusion when they return to face destroyed villages and irrigation systems. Here they have to work, and they have to work hard.

"I have listed a number of serious problems, including those of a psychological nature. They can be resolved, but this will take efforts by all government agencies and huge investment. It also requires a system of accounting and control. Since the policy of national reconciliation began, 130 thousand refugees have returned home. We are expecting a million more to return over the next year. Our job is to meet

them on the border, receive them and provide them with transportation to their places of residence. Special 'peace hostels' have been set up for them.

"It is also our job to do restoration work and reconstruction. It has been very difficult indeed to receive those 130 thousand people and provide them with all they need with a war going on, but we have managed to do it with Soviet help. The returnees are provided with housing and plots of land. Some people are given the opportunity to enter schools and colleges and others can now return to teaching or scientific research. Many have joined the army and militia.

"If everything involved in the reception and settlement of returnees is handled properly, no one will be hurt and there will be a breakthrough in the mentality of those who still have refugee status. We will show them and the world that we are discharging our duties honestly and in good faith. On the other hand, even a slight delay or mistake could cancel out all that has been done.

"Aid to the returning refugees is being distributed in strict compliance with documents. Not a single case has been reported to date of anyone being deceived or short-supplied. We will be doing our best to rule out any malpractice in receiving masses of returnees. We are all going through a serious test right now. We may emerge victorious or we may sustain unpredictable political losses. The three million refugees who have yet to return will blame all their wrongs on the government. That is only natural."

Have the returnees any grounds for complaints about lack of attention on the part of the authorities, and can they count on their grievances being heard?

"Recently we issued a special appeal to the returnees to encourage them to report their grievances to us. So far no complaints have been lodged. We have even taken the following step: any refugee is free to return to Afghanistan for 6 months to see everything for himself. If he does not like what he sees, he is free to leave for any part of the world. As I said, 130 thousand returned, and of that number only 10 thousand have decided to reemigrate."

The most difficult part of repatriation is the restoration of what has been destroyed by the war. You said that this is your job as well. What are your plans here?

"Regrettably, we wasted some time before we got down to restoration work. We must now catch up on the time we've wasted and do a great deal of work before the winter. Otherwise we will face serious problems. A special agency has been formed to deal with restoration, and the first plan has been drawn up for it. The governors of all provinces have been notified that they must make lists of the destroyed facilities on their territories. We have just sent out letters to them instructing them to select one destroyed village on each of their territories so as to use it as a model for testing the methods of restoration work.

"In June we shall be beginning to restore communities in Kabul province and if we succeed here we shall be able to prove to the people that we can restore the whole country."

In my view, the return of the refugees and their reception is something that can unite all Afghans. Is the private sector involved in this work, and what is the part played by public organizations?

"We have concluded a number of contracts with the private sector under which they will handle the transportation of refugees and their luggage directly to the 'peace hostels' or to their places of residence. The private companies will be paid by the government for their work. Instead of building new hotels for the returnees, we are renting them from private owners. That is what we have done in Herat.

"Public organizations, and among them youth and women's organizations, the trade unions, and the National Front are increasing their assistance all the time."

I have heard from returnees that the leaders of the Peshawar Seven, or the so-called "irreconcilables," tried to interfere with their return. That posture obstructs the implementation of the Geneva Accords. What course will future developments follow?

"No party or political organization can be happy about losing its members and political influence and will try to avoid this happening. The actions of the Peshawar Seven are predictable. The leaders of the opposition there will no doubt keep on trying to prevent the refugees from returning home."

Does this mean that one should not count on them taking a realistic stand and accepting a compromise?

"It's very hard to induce them to change their way of thinking and abandon their ideological stance. But it is very often the case that, even while remaining committed to their previous position, people do give up their activities. This happens when they lose support and cannot attract new followers, or when the forces that have been backing them desert them. As a result, they find themselves isolated and, though they do not abandon their views, they are no longer dangerous."

What is the stand of the Pakistani government on the issue of the return of the refugees?

"Our experience over the past year suggests that, regrettably, Islamabad is against the return of the refugees. It is using their presence on Pakistani territory for propaganda purposes in order to brainwash the public at home and promote its anti-Soviet campaign."

What is the position of Iran?

"Pakistan is demanding political change in Afghanistan and Iran is demanding both political and ideological changes. It is trying to cash in on the 'Afghan problem' and the problem of the refugees and make capital to promote its religious ideology."

Dr Sharq, a recently elected parliament is soon to begin its work. What hopes do you pin on it?

The Parliament has existed in Afghanistan as an institution in the past. It was elected under the King, but previous parliaments could not really change anything, or really serve the people. We are going through a very special period now. The country is being restored and the people want peace above all. The people who elected their representatives to Parliament elected them to press for peace and calm, and they will see to it that their mandate is complied with. I have spoken to many elected representatives. They are fully aware of their responsibility ot the people of Afghanistan and they are sure of their strength."

Many suggestions have been made with regard to the future state and political system of Afghanistan. You are a man of great experience in this area. Could you share your views on the subject?

"My experience goes back a long way, as you have seen from my biography. Many of the present forms of government are novel to me. The most important thing is to prevent the repetition of past mistakes and this goes above all for discrepancies between words and deeds. If we say something to the people we must be sure that we can back up that statement with actions. Our actions must not run counter to what the people want.

"There are sections of the population in Afghanistan who are hostile to us. But heaven forbid that we should say that the counterrevolutionaries have goaded them against us. No, such attitudes on the part of some people are the result of our own mistakes. We committed those mistakes and thereby created the basis for the activities of the armed opposition. It is not worth our while to look for foreign connections in all cases. We must always proceed from the fact that we are to blame for our errors and that we must get to the bottom of our failures. If we succeed in learning from our past, our future govemment will be able to work, and if we fail, the government won't be a stable one. The most important thing is to pass the test."

Homecoming

Inna Rudenko

Helping Afghanistan veterans to readapt

At last, they are returning. Mothers, fathers, wives, sweethearts and children alike have long been waiting for the hour when our boys come back from Afghanistan. On our TV screens we see the border – flags, flowers, embraces. Welcoming smiles. The soldiers are smiling too, but even in fleeting close-up we see the eyes that are not smiling.

These soldiers are not just returning from military service; they are coming back from war. These boys have seen battle, while their fathers have not. In a way they are older than their fathers because they have been exposed to bullets. Such is the bitter paradox of history. Joy is mixed with a sense of guilt. Not covering their heads with ashes – which is always useless, but a feeling that spurs one to action.

Here is part of a letter: "I am forty, and there is a gap in my biography because I have not served in the Army – my poor eyesight makes me unfit for service in the ranks. I have a suggestion: build a sanatorium for Afghan veterans. Then they'll have a chance to put their health to rights and meet their comrades-in-arms. I am ready to donate towards the building of such a sanatorium."

This letter from Alexander Starikov, who lives in Riga, was published in the newspaper Komsomolskaya Pravda. Thousands of people have remitted money for the building of a rehabilitation centre – we must help the boys who were there.

The rehabilitation centre project, now being considered by the government, is to be a model of architectural, design, and medical excellence. Our first concern must be to restore the physical health of the boys, and not only of those scarred physically.

Let me remember that not only bodily wounds leave scars. Those who served in Afghanistan need social rehabilitation. After rest and treatment, let them return to normal life quickly and without psychic traumas. I believe a national programme is needed to ensure their smooth transition to peacetime life. They need health centres, many need to be housed, some need artificial limbs or wheelchairs, and some just flowers on their graves. But even these last do not always get their due from us.

If we ensure that none of them will have to camp on the doorsteps of various offices in search of one thing and another, that alone would go a long way towards helping them to be reintegrated into society.

Coming home is not yet a full return to civilian life.

I've read letters from Afghanistan veterans who pronounce harsh, straightforward judgements on our civilian life. A sharp eye for social ills is a good thing, but we would not like their views to be reduced to bitter black-and-white.

I've heard many veterans confess that after their return they took a long time to cool down from the heat of battle and, having no worthy outlet, their energy was wasted, at best. But excessive tutelage and sometimes plain mistrust of those to whom life and death were entrusted only yesterday – this has been written about more than once – are no less dangerous.

We have long waited for this meeting, but are we really ready for it? What can we tell those who return? That is not an easy question to answer.

The feelings of Alexander Starikov, a fitter by trade, may be those of a "civilian," but at least they are basically humane. The same cannot be said of the suggestion recently made by "an engineer of human souls."

"If the worst comes to the worst and a crisis breaks out, the nation will need battle-tested people prepared to sacrifice their lives," thinks author Alexander Prokhanov (see Literaturnaya Rossiya, No. 18). He feels that the Afghan veterans are people "potentially prepared to make sacrifices."

Everything about this statement raises eyebrows, to say the least: dark hints at some possible "crisis" – why should there be a crisis at this particular time? – the wish to isolate the former soldiers into a special group and not to reintegrate them into society. But most worrying is the view of them as potential victims – haven't we had enough victims?

If anything, these people should not be isolated.

A new building is being erected in the home for blind and deaf-mute children in Zagorsk, a home that has now become well known to the scientific community. Some of the builders are Afghanistan veterans. One of them says in a recent documentary film (which has already won an international prize) that only work – actively doing good – helped him to regain peace of mind.

The film is called "Homecoming."

We have eagerly waited for their return. Now we must do everything to make sure that the soldiers' homecoming is a true return.

Perestroika through the eyes of a Chinese journalist

Wang Fei

For three years glasnost, like a fresh breeze, has swept over the vast Russian land. Under its banner, spectacular changes have happened in the Soviet media. With these changes the Soviet media is playing a growingly important role of a bugle call, ushering in an era of economic reform and social progress.

Today, Soviet media's long-standing officialism, propagandism, lack of information and its habit of reporting only the good news and not the bad, and turning a blind eye towards and not reporting the negative and gloomy aspects of the Soviet society, have changed conspicuously. Ban has been lifted from a number of noted literary works and expositions. Soviet leaders who had been sacrificed on the altar of Stalin's personality cult have been rehabilitated one after another. The media's role of supervision over the Party and government officials has been strengthened. There has been more and more exposure and criticism of bureaucracy, corruption, abuse of power and violation of law and discipline. Criticism of Stalinism has deepened. There are less and less long, windy and boring articles which are full of dogmatism and cliché.

Soviet media's reform carried out under glasnost is a matter of the Soviet people and our Soviet colleagues. However, in this present interdependent world, the positive changes that happened in the Soviet society and media, despite its limitations, cannot but rouse the keen interest and joy of the people and media circles of other parts of the world.

The media in some of the East European socialist countries has also initiated reform similar to that of the Soviet media, and some have gone even further. But in some other socialist countries, Gorbachev's glasnost is not understood and is watched with suspicion. The media there seldom objectively reports the changes that are happening in the Soviet Union. I think this also is normal. The people of all countries have the right to act according to the actual conditions of their own countries and should not indiscriminately copy the ways of others. However, thoughts that are scientific will know no boundary. What people need is time and patience.

For the majority of countries in the world, the series of reforms taken by the Soviet media under glasnost are nothing new. Because the media in these countries has already done so a long time ago to comply to the needs of the people there. Even so, as a Chinese journalist I would like to express my appreciation of the staunchness, courage and dauntless spirit my Soviet colleagues have shown. They have broken through one taboo after another under difficult circumstances.

Our Soviet colleagues have openly and frankly admitted that there are still many taboos to be tackled; such as the coverage of the appointments and removals of high-ranking officials of the Soviet Party and government, Soviet defence and foreign relations. I don't mean to say that there are no classified issues in these spheres. But many major events in these fields should be made known to the people, and they should be allowed to air their views. It would be abnormal and absurd if this is not allowed in a socialist country where the people are the master, and officials, their civil servants.

Furthermore, in the Soviet Union, the supreme leaders of the Party and the government till now are still exempted from criticism...

Here, I recalled the comment made by the late Italian Communist leader Togliatti in 1956 during the big debate that followed the revelation of the secret report made by Khrushchev on the cult of the individual and its consequence. Togliatti held that there were many factors that caused the emergence of Stalin's dictatorship in the Soviet Union; but the major cause came from the defects in the Soviet social system that brought about degeneration. He said that in the Soviet Union the proletarian dictatorship (that is, ruling the country according to the will of the proletarian masses) had degenerated into Party dictatorship, then dictatorship by a few in the Political Bureau and finally degenerated into Stalin's personal dictatorship. Due to such degeneration, the Soviet system had lost its capacity to rectify its own mistakes and could not prevent or curb in time the series of tragic errors and crimes from happening. Unfortunately, the then Soviet leadership adopted a stance of complete rejection of Togliatti's thesis and even criticized it.

Mikhail Shatrov's play "The Brest Peace" was put out in China shortly after its publication by the Soviet magazine Novy Mir.

The problem now is, if the supreme leaders of the Soviet Union still enjoy the privilege of being devoid of public supervision and criticism, then how can a recurrence be prevented? A recurrence, under certain circumstances, of a tragedy similar to that of Stalin's personal dictatorship. How could it be possible to prevent Brezhnev from committing mistakes during his lifetime rather than making belated criticism after his death?

Power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely. There is no lack of precedents of this in world history. Even the socialist countries in modern times cannot be exceptions. Doesn't this historical lesson call for deep thinking? History has proved that highly concentrated power without checks always goes together with two spectres – the personality cult and the system of life tenure. All in all, the essence is undemocratic and non-socialist.

I hope the Soviet media, together with people of all circles in the Soviet Union, could find a correct solution so that they can improve the system and guarantee that there will be no repetition of the tragedy of the abuse of power by individual leaders. I want to add that the question I now put is not meant to be an accusation of anybody or an expression of non-confidence. The question is only put from an academic angle and is aimed to probe on the functions and roles of the media and the task and problems confronting them. Because similar questions also exist in China.

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Buying and selling abroad.

Alexander Guber

Judged by conventional standards, our foreign trade is in a poor state. After reaching a peak in 1985, the volume of trade has been in decline. The dramatic fluctuations in the world markets, which until recently favoured us, have changed direction and seriously undermined the position of much of our export and import. To sum up: today we are spending more and more to produce our main exports (mineral fuels), while currency earnings, and hence our import potential, are going down.

The background against which we are reforming our foreign economic activity is extremely unfavourable. We are now reaping the bitter harvest of the period of stagnation. Many people, however, tend to attribute this state of foreign trade not to outdated structures, but to the attempts to radically change and replace them.

What's wrong with our exports

The Law on the State Enterprise speaks, among other things, of the foreign trade activity of industrial plants. Article 19 says that export deliveries are given top priority.

But is it orders from above or the plant's own interests that prompt it to act in this way? The journal Foreign Trade writes: "... drastic changes in the structure and conduct of our export activity mean that exports have ceased to be an often undesirable addition to the main production and economic activities of industrial plants."

Unfortunately, that optimism is not entirely borne out by the facts. I recently visited several factories which have independent access to world markets. None of the workers there, except the managers and the personnel of foreign trade firms, had the faintest idea how they personally or the work collective as a whole benefited from the fact that the factory worked for export.

For years we explained away failures in our foreign trade by citing factors beyond our control, such as discrimination against Soviet goods in the West, and tough competition on capitalist markets. While these factors cannot be discounted, the main reason lies elsewhere.

Our industry is not yet prepared to enter the foreign market on a wide scale. The mass of our products still falls short of customers' demands as regards quality, technical standard and design. Goods intended for export have to be manufactured with extra effort and resources. And even then the Western marketing firms have to bring the goods to a level acceptable to the local consumer: provide them with electronics, change fittings in cars and even repaint machine tools and tractors.

Joint ventures in which the Soviet side has an interest, spend up to 70 per cent of their currency earnings from the sale of our products in the West bringing the goods up to scratch.

No wonder Professor Joseph Ha of the United States believes our quality control standards are too liberal. This is why, he says, sporting footwear made in the U.S.S.R. under an agreement with Adidas is inferior to that made in the F.R.G. One can argue whether this is really so, but the fact remains that athletes prefer West German footwear.

Learning to do business in the world market

The order of the director general of the Uralmash engineering plant to set up a foreign trading firm is dated January 30, 1987.

Although 10-12 per cent of its products are for export, Uralmash had previously taken no part in foreign trade operations and had no dealings with the customers. Until recently, all industrial plants were in the same situation. However, enterprises in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Minsk and some other cities had easier access to foreign partners. Sverdlovsk is hardly ever visited by foreigners: the city of almost a million and a half is off the Intourist track.

ANATOLY OSINTSEV,
assistant director general of Uralmash

It's good that we've now got direct access to world markets. It's a pity that it's only happened now. For decades we've been stewing in our own juice. We didn't know what similar plants abroad were doing and they didn't know what we were doing. You might say that there are always catalogues and prospectuses. Fair enough. Except that advertising is an area where we lag behind particularly distressingly. The advertising matter we send to the potential foreign buyers of our machines is not informative enough, is less well designed than that of leading Western firms, and reaches customers with a huge time lag. For fairness sake, I must say that I wouldn't believe the advertising prospectuses of capitalist companies a hundred per cent either. For instance, a steel plant in the Ukraine installed a continuous steel pouring line made by the West German firm DEMAG. From the specifications, it appeared to be better than a similar plant manufactured by Uralmash. But it turned out to be the other way round. They are now going to replace the imported line with our own...

STANISLAV TOLSTOV,
assistant director of a foreign trade firm

Something similar happened in the Kuznetsky coalfield. We use Soviet, Japanese and American excavators in the mines there. The imported ones look prettier, but they cannot withstand the local climate and geological conditions. We are now receiving requests from Kemerovo to replace these imported excavators with Soviet-made ones.

A. OSINTSEV. We seem to have mounted our hobby horse: our machines are just as good as Western ones, only they don't look so pretty. More often than not, this is self-deception, although the incidents mentioned here really occurred. If you are isolated from the world, you are bound to fall behind. What is particularly distressing is that Uralmash produces many excellent machines, for example, excavators, but foreign consumeers do not want to buy them because they do not correspond to the standards in a given country.

When it set up its own foreign trading firm, Uralmash, so it would seem, acquired the discretionary powers necessary to engage in foreign trade activity. For instance, it can form its portfolio of orders itself and choose its buyers. The state order to Uralmash for 1988 engages practically the whole of our production capacity and fixes the range of goods. This seems natural considering the role of Uralmash in the country's economy:

What and how?

thousands of factories and construction projects need its machines. But then what can it sell abroad? The plan does include former export commitments. But how, in these conditions, can the plant sign new contracts? My interlocutors do not have an answer to that.

What to sell?

in the new conditions of self-financing, Uralmash finds cooperation with the CMEA countries unprofitable. Supposing

The new Soviet Volga and Lada car models attracted attention at the recent Leipzig Fair.

the plant makes an excavator for a Soviet enterprise. Some of the components are supplied, let us say, from Poland. Their price is 2.5-3 times higher than the wholesale prices used in settlements between Soviet factories. No wonder Uralmash will try to dodge signing such contracts.

This is a sore question that impedes cooperation and direct links between the enterprises of the CMEA member countries.

Foreign trade prices need a lot of streamlining.

A.OSINTSEV. Mashinoexport, the national foreign trade association that formerly marketed Uralmash products, tried to attract customers with comparatively low prices. But very often the low price put customers off and aroused suspicion that we were dumping inferior goods. People preferred to buy more expensive but higher-quality goods. One needed skill to explain and demonstrate the merits of the machine, while the Mashinoexport staff representatives were not qualified to do that. Indeed, one could hardly expect them to know all our machines in minute detail.

VLADIMIR LYKASOV,
assistant director
of a foreign trade firm

Now members of our firm take part in negotiations. They know our products well, but for the rest they have to rely on the assistance of foreign trade experts. The Tyazhmash foreign trade association is now subordinate not to the Ministry of Foreign Trade, but to the ministry in charge of heavy engineering. We cannot and do not want to detach ourselves from the ministry. In the Tyazhmash, four workers represent the interests of Uralmash. They are native Muscovites and not people from our factory. But they have experience in foreign trade matters.

Personnel training

A.OSINTSEV. We recruit only young people to work in our foreign trade firm. They are better at learning foreign languages and the intricacies of export and import deals and, most important, they are more open to contacts.

But this, too, involves a problem. Where to train them and what manuals to use? So far, adequate manuals are nonexistent. They are still being written. There is no legislation on frames of reference for factory foreign trade firms. It is unlikely that manuals will appear in advance of such legislation. The Academy of Foreign Trade in Moscow caters only to Moscow residents: it does not even have accommodation for people from outside Moscow. This was tolerable in former times, when all foreign trade was concentrated in the Foreign Trade Ministry and its associations, i.e., in Moscow and abroad. Now that foreign trade firms have appeared in other cities, this situation can no longer be tolerated. There is no justification for the former procedure whereby Uralmash people can only go on a business trip to Moscow if they receive a special summons from their ministry. Uralmash needs no clearance to send its people to CMEA countries, but it needs the ministry's clearance to send people to Moscow.

Producer and exporter rolled into one

Belavtomaz (the Byelorussian amalgamation for the manufacture of giant lorries) formed a foreign trading firm in early 1987.

Such products of the amalgamation as the MAZ trucks and the BelAZ tip lorries are well known outside the U.S.S.R. Today trunkline articulated vehicles capable of carrying 30 tons of cargoes to a distance of a thousand kilometres without refuelling are rolling off the production lines.

Formerly, the plant sold its machines to the Avtoexport association at fixed prices in rubles. The plant was not particularly interested in the price its lorries fetched abroad, as it spelled no material gains or losses to it anyway. The industry's workers considered foreign trade experts to be a select group, a caste. They suspected them of "living it up" abroad and

blamed them for all the failures in the export of their trucks. Avtoexport people, for their part, had grievances against the manufacturers: you make bad machines and we have to market them.

There was a grain of truth in this mutual recrimination, but it offered no way out. Now the producer and the exporter are one and the same person. Foreign trading operations have become (and must become) part and parcel of economic activity directly affecting the well-being of the plant's workers.

At first, many people felt euphoric: now that we can do our trade ourselves and dispose of our profits, we'll do everything ourselves. But it soon became clear that we had a lot to learn if we were not to botch the whole job. It was not for nothing that the members of foreign trade associations worked for their degrees and graduated from the Academy of Foreign Trade. They know how to conduct negotiations and are fluent in foreign languages. These are not the kind of skills you can acquire in a month or even a year.

EVGENY SELIVONCHIK,
deputy director general of Belavtomaz

The Belavtomaz foreign trade firm was, of course, confronted with the problem of personnel. In this country, Moscow is the only centre where such specialists are trained. Up until now, these experts have worked in Moscow or abroad. Now we need them in Byelorussia. So we'll have to address ourselves to the problem of training and retraining our personnel.

To compound our problems, the Ministry of Automobile Industry and the other higher bodies have not allocated any money to finance the firm. We have had to raise the money ourselves. For this reason, we cannot afford any overstaffing.

We are, by and large, through with the organizational stage. It's time to get down to business. But there are still some problems that we cannot solve ourselves.

Take the planning of export production. There is nothing new in the idea that such planning must be flexible to meet the situation on foreign markets. But planning bodies allocate export resources in the old way: if something has been marked for sale, you have to sell it even if there is no demand; if no provision has been made for export, you have nothing to sell even if there is a demand.

In 1987, the association's hard currency plan was increased fivefold as compared with 1986. But this poses serious problems. On the international market, Byelorussian motorcar makers have to compete with well-known firms with excellent traditions of manufacture, advertizing, marketing and servicing. Maintenance is an area where we are very far behind. In the decades of its existence, Avtoexport failed to create an adequate maintenance service.

Selivonchik believes we should cooperate with foreign firms, use some of their components and by all means use their service facilities.

As things stand now, to provide foreign buyers with machines that suit them, we have to import some units and components. In order to export, we need to import. Settlements are handled by the Foreign Trade Bank (Vneshtorgbank). The coefficients for exports are different from those for imports. As a result, having sold, say, a million rubles' worth of goods abroad, the association will be able to spend less than 400,000 rubles on imports.

Such coefficients and their correlation are hardly an incentive for the association to expand its exports. For some mysterious reason, other plants have more favourable coefficients. But the practice is wrong in principle. The well-being of a work collective should depend on its performance and not on indices established by someone on high. It is enough to change the indices, and good work becomes bad and vice versa.

Could this be the reason why my interlocutors tried to skirt sharp corners in our conversation? I had the impression that the handover of foreign trade functions to industrial plants was not happening as has been envisaged in theory. On the face of it, the foreign trading firm is subordinate to the production unit to which it caters and with which it decides on all matters of export and import, and the higher bodies have no right to interfere in the economic activity of the firm for which they bear no responsibility. This is how it is on paper. But is it really the case?

Every move by the firm is cleared with the Ministry of Automobile Industry or with Avtoexport. This is natural in the initial period, when the firm's workers lack the necessary expertise. But it looks as if everybody is getting used to this procedure and will not be in a hurry to change it. How, then, can one talk of independence if all the output, down to the last machine, has been distributed for five years ahead and will go to a particular buyer and not to another even if he offers more favourable terms?

Some trucks produced by Western firms operate under the auspices of Sovtransavto. Sometimes these trucks are lent to Sovtransavto for free, just for the sake of advertising. It is high time Belavtomaz started doing the same, especially to promote new models still unknown on foreign markets. But the association cannot afford to offer, say, its 75-ton BelAZ truck for trials. Permission has been granted to send a couple of such machines to a prospective buyer. A one-off permission obtained from a Moscow-based office. This is the true value of the economic autonomy of the association and its right to engage in foreign trade operations.

* * *

And yet a significant change in foreign economic activity has taken place. True, we cannot yet report a dramatic growth in foreign trade. But would it have been better if trade had continued to grow at the former rate and by former methods? Can we be proud of being the biggest exporters of oil, gas and timber and the biggest importers of grain?

It is not simply that it ill becomes a great industrial power to exchange its natural resources for manufactured goods, and that this cannot go on indefinitely, if only because the resources are limited. Imagine for a moment the amount of effort and the cost involved in bringing millions of tons of fuel and raw materials to the border, how this clogs the transport arteries with freight, and how many railway cars, how much energy and fuel are needed to keep all this going. And in exchange we receive neatly packed machines and consumer goods. The cost of delivering these goods sustained by our partners is immeasurably less than our own transport outlays.

We must seek not to increase the sheer volume of trade, but to promote the kind of foreign trade that will best contribute to the new social and economic course our nation is following. It is a question of radical restructuring.

As for economic benefits, we'll have to be patient. Experience has furnished repeated proof that serious reforms do not yield instant results, and that no good can come of wanting to enjoy the results straight away.

Dates and ages

Celebrations of the millennium of the Baptism of Rus are taking place in our country between June 5 and 16. Our correspondent spoke to the Metropolitan of Kiev and Galitsa, Filaret, Exarch of the Ukraine.

The General Secretary of the CC CPSU Mikhail Gorbachev recently received the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Pimen and members of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church. You were present at the meeting in the Kremlin. What were your impressions of it?

We were very glad that Mikhail Sergeyevich received the Holy Patriarch Pimen and members of the Synod. That meeting was of exceptional importance. It was the second meeting of the prelacy of the Russian Orthodox Church with leaders of the Soviet state since the October Revolution! It passed in a very cordial atmosphere and bears out that relations between the church and the state are developing in a positive way.

During the conversation it was stated that the church in every way supports the beneficial process of perestroika, and is contributing to the moral renewal of socialist society, and the spiritual enrichment and patriotism of all believers. The general principles of humanity were touched on, those principles on which the moral renewal of society could be based. It is a comforting thought that the very climate of the attitude to religion in the country is now changing. That helps strengthen the unity of our society...

I must say the meeting left a very good impression.

And how are the preparations for the celebrations going?

The interest in the millennium is very great throughout the world. Taking part in the celebrations will be the heads and representatives of the Orthodox and ancient Eastern churches, a big delegation from the Roman Catholic Church, from the Anglican and other Protestant Churches, and from various international religious organizations. Our invitations have also gone out to U.N. representatives. UNESCO passed a special resolution urging countries to mark this great event of our times. So the entire Christian world, and not just Christians, but representatives of other religions are taking part in our celebrations.

They will take place chiefly in Moscow and other cities – Kiev, Vladimir and Leningrad. It was in Kiev that the Baptism took place, and it was in Vladimir and Leningrad that the patriarchate of the Russian Church has been based at different periods in its history. The anniversary is being marked in all primatial sees, both in the U.S.S.R. and abroad.

But this is not a celebration for believers alone. Are non-religious organizations also taking part in it?

We are glad that the Soviet public too is taking part. This anniversary is more than just a religious one. For the Baptism played an immense role in the development of our country's history, our culture, and Russian statehood. Consequently, that naturally makes it not just a red-letter day for the church, but for all our people.

We are marking the millennium of the Baptism of Rus, from which three nations emerged: the Russians, the Ukrainians and the Byelorussians. However, our church is multinational. That makes it a great day for all the peoples and nationalities that belong to the Russian Orthodox Church, American people included. In the 18th century, our missionaries brought Christ's teachings to the West Coast of North America. And we are happy that the autocephalous Orthodox Church and other Christian churches of the United States of America with which good relations have developed over the years will be taking part. We had good relations with them even during the years of confrontation between our two countries, as the churches did not give in to the prevailing atmosphere and continued to cooperate. And, I would say, set a good example to statesmen, the results of which we are witnessing today.

We believe the churches in the Soviet Union and the U.S. will continue to cooperate. The anniversary of the Baptism of Rus will, in our view, promote the development of relations between churches the world over, including the Catholic Church and others that resulted from the Reformation, and will also help destroy the barriers of mistrust that now exist between East and West, and improve relations between the Soviet Union and the United States. It offers Americans the opportunity to see something of life in the Soviet Union, of the perestroika, democratization and glasnost that are now under way in our country. And, best of all, to get to know this at first hand.

We are somewhat disappointed that certain circles in the United States have yielded to the temptation to push to the forefront questions which in our view seem strange. For instance, the resolution passed by the U.S. Congress in May speaks of the persecution of believers in the Soviet Union. That is a fantasy that can be believed only if one knows nothing about the life of our church.

The U.S. Congress resolution also mentioned the absence of opportunities for believers to have their own religious literature. Is that really the case?

I should say that for this anniversary we are publishing 100,000 copies of the Bible in Russian. For the first time, the New Testament is being published in the Ukrainian language. Aa a gift from the Biblical Society, we are to receive 100 thousand copies of the Bible in Ukrainian and 150,000 copies of the annotated Bible edited by Professor Alexander Lopukhin. For the anniversary believers will also receive half a million prayer books in Russian, and other religious literature.

It would be appropriate now to recall the contribution made by the Russian

Orthodox Church to the spiritual and material culture of our country; besides giving us our alphabet, it promoted book-printing, literature, architecture, and development of such ideals as moral self-improvement.

Its contribution was very great. It is hard to name a field of human activity in which its influence was not felt. Books and literacy began to spread quickly after the adoption of Christianity: although they did exist in Russia before that, they were not so widespread. Schools were opened. Already in the time of Yaroslav there were 16 schools attached to the dioceses. Their syllabuses bore comparison with West European universities. When Anna, the daughter of Yaroslav, married King Henri I and arrived in Paris, she amazed the French with her high standard of education. Yet her husband could barely write his name.

The Church's contribution to Russian architecture is immense. During the reign of Vladimir in Kiev there were about 400 churches, and under Yaroslav there were already 700. To this day we are amazed by the Russian architecture of those times and by the icons. Today the whole world has heard of Andrei Rublev. His "Trinity" is a miracle of world iconography.

The Church had an immense influence on literature. In the 11th-12th centuries there appeared such great works as "The Lay of Igor's Host," and the "Sermon on Law and Grace" by the Kiev Metropolitan Illarion. And take the church annals. For all that we know of the history of our country we have to thank the monks who compiled these annals. But, of course, the church exerted its greatest influence in developing morality and spirituality. Its role in that field can hardly be overestimated. It virtually created strong family bonds and promoted legislation, not to mention Russian statehood. It can, I believe, be said without exaggeration that if it had not been for Christianity and the Church, no one knows what path the history of our country would have taken after the conquest of Russia by the Tatars and Mongols. With the local princes disunited and constantly at odds with each other, almost the sole force uniting the Russian people at that time was the Church.

St. Sergius of Radonezh not only prayed. He forged arms, and rallied the princes in word and deed...

Yes, he not only prayed and blessed, but helped liberate the country from the Tatar-Mongol yoke. In those unsettled times the Church also played an important part. The Trinity-St.Sergius Monastery, like the Kiev-Pechery Monastery in the Ukraine, became centres of spiritual and cultural life, where annals were kept, books were printed, and knowledge was disseminated.

During the Great Patriotic War, our Church proved by its actions that it was always with the people, that it shared with them not only their joys, but the griefs and sorrows that fell to their lot.

A new law is now being drafted on freedom of conscience. What prompted such a move?

The development of our society. The last law on religion was adopted in 1929. It reflected the situation in the country at that time. Since then many of its provisions have become outdated. So the state's desire to revise it, and bring it into conformity with the present day, is quite natural.

In the post-revolutionary period, there were difficult moments in relations between the church and the state. At least a part of the clergy proved unable to understand at once what was happening, and was unready for the disestablishment of the church. The thirties were particularly hard, not only for the Church, but for all the people. Under the personality cult, churches were shut down, repressive measures were taken against the clergy, and not only against the clergy, but against others, including statesmen and active builders of socialism. Now the mistakes committed against the Church and believers in the thirties and subsequent years are being put right. This is borne out by the development of church life in recent times. The state is rendering every assistance in the preparations for the celebration of the millennium of the Baptism of Rus, by opening several monasteries, registering communities, and building new churches.

Believers and non-believers make up a single society, and we all ardently wish to devote our efforts to its development and improvement. What heartens us particularly is that more attention is now focussed on the problems of morality and spirituality. That is a platform we can share for cooperation.

What specifically does the church do in this respect?

It promotes a renovation of the moral life of that part of the population that belongs to its fold. First and foremost, it helps strengthen the family. And a good family is the basis of society. It helps fight drunkenness, drug taking, and other anomalies, and calls for honest work. That is our contribution to the development of society.

How many parishes are there now, and is their number increasing?

There are about 7 thousand, and more are being formed.

And how many believers are there?

We believe that there are about 50 million in this country. Some attend church regularly, others less often. Our task is to awaken the moral forces in man, promote his spiritual development.

Is the number of believers increasing?

Yes.

Why?

I see desire for spiritual values as one importnat reason, and another reason is the danger of a thermonuclear catastrophe, and the hope of avoiding it.

In which countries are there Russian Orthodox churches?

In Western and Central Europe, the United States, Canada, and in Latin America. We have representatives and missions in the Middle East, Japan, Australia, North Africa – Egypt and Morocco. The millennium of the Baptism of Rus is being celebrated in about 80 centres of Russian Orthodoxy abroad. I would say our Church has ties with the churches and representatives of other religions in about 100 countries.

Our foreign institutions – exarchates, Diocesan Sees, deaneries and parishes – form part of the Moscow patriarchy and abide, on the one hand, by the charter of the Russian Orthodox Church, and, on the other, by the laws of the country in which they are.

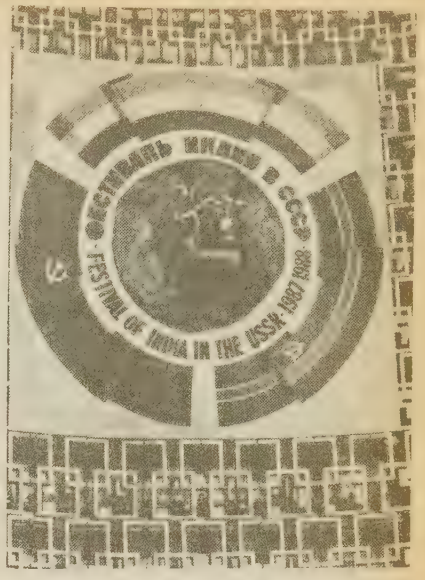
What part does the Russian Orthodox Church take in the religious movements for peace?

The peace activities of our Church are very extensive. I shall mention only the main lines along which they run. First of all, there is the development of ties with Orthodox and other Christian churches. We belong to many international religious organizations, such as the World Council of Churches, which unites religious representatives from 100 countries. Then there is the Conference of European Churches, which includes most of the non-Catholic churches of our continent, the Christian Peace Conference, the Council of European Bishop's conferences (Roman Catholic Church), and the World Conference on Religion for Peace. No important international undertaking aimed at protecting peace and saving mankind from a nuclear catastrophe passes us by.

We are gladdened by the visit of the U.S. President to the Soviet Union and his talks with General Secretary Gorbachev. We would like to see this visit promote the development of Soviet-American relations, advancing the process of abolishing thermonuclear weapons. We pray for the success of the visit. Everyone in the world will benefit from it. Because today, as never before, it has become clear that we are all members of a single human family. We all have the same problems, although each country also has its own concerns.

Interview conducted by
ALEXANDER KOZLOV

India on a visit in the U.S.S.R.



The U.S.S.R. Festival in India is more than halfway through, while the India Festival in the Soviet Union, which began a few months earlier, in mid-1987, is already drawing to a close. Our Indian readers might be interested to know how this spectacular year-long event has passed, and how the Soviet people have reacted to it.

New Times correspondent Alexander Usvatov discusses this subject with Mrs VEENA SIKRI and GEORGI IVANOV, who, throughout the year, have been handling the organizational side of the India Festival in the U.S.S.R.

The first to be interviewed is Mrs VEENA SIKRI, cultural counsellor at the Embassy of the Republic of India in the Soviet Union. She is now chief coordinator of the organizational aspect of the activities arranged as part of the India Festival in the U.S.S.R.

New Times. Mrs Sikri, first a general question: what are the objectives of the India Festival in the Soviet Union?

Veena Sikri. Like the U.S.S.R. Festival in India, our Festival here has been conceived and planned, from the outset, as a festival of friendship between our two nations. This friendship fosters their mutual interest in each other's art, literature and way of life. The Soviet people have always shown much interest in Indian culture in its various forms. I have satisfied myself of that over the years of my work in Moscow (this is now my second term here). I must say, though, that for all their interest in India's ancient and distinctive art, Soviet people did not really have a profound knowledge of it. There was nowhere the Soviet public could get such systematic knowledge. Guest tours of, say, performers of Indian classical music were rare, episodic and, moreover, confined to just a few of the larger cities. The same is true of Indian classical dance, all the more so its various styles. As for Indian folklore, your people knew rather more about it from the commercial Indian films shown on Soviet screens from time to time. But, if you take Indian painting, sculpture, jewellery or architecture, the Soviet people simply had no way of seeing any of that.

So the idea of our Festival was to give Soviet people – at least most of them and in as many regions of the vast Soviet Union as possible – a chance to see all this at first hand and, of course, at its best. India has sent over its foremost musicians and dancers and displayed its top-quality items at exhibitions over the past year. So our one aim has been to help the Soviet people learn much more about India.

N.T. Were there other aims?

V.S. Yes, such as to give Indians and Soviet people an opportunity of mingling with each other as informally as possible. Experts exchanged opinions and new information at symposiums and seminars devoted to various aspects of Indian reality, history, culture, and to Indian-Soviet relations. However, trips by Indian youth groups along various routes and their meetings with their Soviet coevals proved still more important and interesting. They engaged in endless conversations, telling each other about themselves, exchanging views and ideas, and so on. They, the young, danced and did yoga exercises together... I'm sure there's nothing like such contacts to promote understanding. Moreover, Soviet cinemagoers have seen Indian movies at film festivals held in over twenty cities, and sampled Indian cuisine (Indian food was cooked and sold in a number of cities), which also added something to their knowledge of India. So we are pleased to say that our national festival in the U.S.S.R. has fully achieved its objective.

N.T. How many cities have our Indian guests visited? There must have been places among them where no Indian had ever set foot before.

V.S. Our Festival has toured not only all the larger cities of the Soviet Union, but many smaller towns as well. Different groups visited about 130 places altogether. Between you and me, I accompanied them to many parts of your country which otherwise I would hardly ever have had a chance to see. Besides Central Russia, the Festival's programme took us to Siberia and the Far East, Central Asia and the Transcaucasus, the Ukraine and the Baltics. Actually, I can't name a single geographical region of the U.S.S.R. which was missed out completely.

N.T. How, in your opinion, did our organizations and organizers cope with the problems involved in arranging the numerous Festival activities?

V.S. The organization of such a major event, held practically on a national scale, is a difficult matter – a very difficult matter, I'd say. One of the problems was to coordinate the efforts of many institutions. It gives me profound gratification to say that our Soviet co-organizers made an all-out effort and did a marvellous and efficient job. Whatever problems

we came up against in our joint work were eventually solved and, most importantly, offset by the enormous interest the Soviet public showed in Indian artists' performances. As for information, advertising and publicity, these were, indeed, not quite up to the mark at times. In places where our concerts were advertised in advance, Indian groups performed to full houses.

N.T. India has had its national festivals in the U.S. and France. Did the Festival in the U.S.S.R. differ from those – in character, geographical scale, or any other particulars?

V.S. The India Festivals in the U.S. and France were on a much smaller scale than that in the U.S.S.R. The same is true of our Festival now in progress in Japan. No more than 500 performers took part in it. We sent a total of nearly 2,000 performers (not to mention youth, sports and other groups) to the U.S.S.R., as against under 500 to America and France. While on the Soviet tour, Indian artists performed in immeasurably more places than elsewhere, of course. Much fewer Indian exhibitions had been arranged in other countries. But the main distinction was that the Soviet people's interest in India, their desire to learn as much as possible about it, their warmth towards Indians, are truly unparalleled elsewhere. The Festival bore out the fact that the friendship between our two countries and nations is unique. It is our common property, and we must take good care of and promote it.

N.T. Don't you think that after the Festival is over, our cultural relations will go back their erstwhile, not very intensive, tenor?

V.S. Not at all. Our cultural exchange should continue to develop and deepen; for instance, the Festival has given an impetus to a more profound and professional study of Indian art in the U.S.S.R.

The Moscow Conservatoire has expressed the desire to start a course in Indian classical music and singing. We have already agreed on the leading Indian teachers coming over here to give instruction to Soviet students, and students going to India with a view to master the Indian musical heritage. The same is true of classical Indian dancing. The State Institute of Theatrical Art in Moscow (GITIS) and the Bolshoi School of Choreography, also in Moscow, have shown serious interest in it. Generally speaking, the Festival has had a beneficial effect on Soviet-Indian relations. New chapters of the Soviet-Indian Friendship Society have emerged in a number of Soviet cities, such as Karaganda, Ferghana, Andizhan, on the initiative of the local public.

Get-togethers with Indian friends are much fun for adults and children alike.

N.T. It's nice to hear all this. My next question is on a slightly different plane. If you were preparing for such a festival today, would you do anything differently?

V.S. Let me see... Well, I would pay still more attention to small towns. Their residents do not have much of a chance to enjoy "live" art shows, let alone foreign ones. Their response to our performances was so sincere and friendly that we were inspired with special affection for them. Also, it would pay to give more attention to universities, to establish direct contacts with them. The contacts we've made with them during the Festival are bound to yield fruit in the future. I have visited Vilnius University, in Lithuania, and learned there that it is in a bad need of experts in Sanskrit – it has turned out that the Lithuanian language is descended from it. We have arranged for a skilled Indian Sanskritisist to come over. Dushanbe University, Tajikistan, is also interested in closer ties with our linguists and philologists. There are examples galore of the Festival having stimulated expanded cooperation in the sphere of culture – and in other spheres, too.

N.T. Such as?

V.S. The economy, for instance. Do you know that the Soviet-Indian restaurant, the Delhi, opened in time for the start of the Festival in Moscow, was the very first joint venture to be set up in the Soviet Union with a foreign firm having an interest in it? We are now considering the opening of similar restaurants in Tashkent, Samarkand and Bukhara, where Indian companies have started building hotels. The sales of various Indian souvenirs, arts and crafts, which have got off to a good start during the Festival, will probably grow.

N.T. The great political importance of our mutual festivals is beyond doubt, of course.

V.S. It certainly is. Symbolically, the Festival began with the unveiling in Moscow of a monument to Indira Gandhi in the presence of Rajiv Gandhi, and on the last day of the Festival, a monument to Mahatma Gandhi will be unveiled in the Soviet capital. President Ramaswami Venkataraman, a veteran of our national liberation movement, will be present at the ceremony. We regard this as a vivid manifestation of the Soviet people's profound respect for India and for the Indian people.

There is no doubt that the India Festival in the U.S.S.R. has contributed to the further progress of our traditionally friendly relations, our all-round and multifaceted cooperation, and our political endeavour for world peace. Grand events like our mutual national festivals afford our two nations a chance of a truly close human communication, which adds enormously to our knowledge of each other, deepens understanding and consolidates our friendship.

Our second interview was with GEORGI IVANOV, director of the Soviet-Indian festivals board, deputy chairman of the Soviet national steering committee of the

India Festival in the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.S.R. Festival in India.

New Times. The India Festival in the Soviet Union is now on its last lap, so to speak. What more are we to see, hear and learn?

Georgi Ivanov. Preparations for the concluding activities are in full swing. Having opened on July 3, 1987, with a mass Utsaw in Moscow, the Festival will close early this July, also in Moscow, with three gala concerts of classical music in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses and three colourful spectacles in the Olimpiisky indoor sports complex.

Both of these programmes will be joint ones, with Indian and Soviet performers taking part. Ravi Shankar, the outstanding composer and musician, is creating music specially for the Festival's closing ceremony, to be performed by his group along with Soviet solo instrumentalists and singers. The outstanding Indian dancer Kumudini Lakhia is rehearsing a story in dance with her Kadamb ensemble and the Soviet ensemble Bahor from Uzbekistan.

It would be no exaggeration to say that all of us Soviet people have vivid memories of the colourful India Festival opening ceremony, attended by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and telecast countrywide. President Ramaswami Venkataraman is coming to Moscow for the concluding performances.

These two dates are separated by a year, a whole year of the festival of Indian culture on the Soviet soil. The Festival swept practically all over our country – from Murmansk and Arkhangelsk in the north to Dushanbe and Chardzhou in the south, from Brest and Lvov in the west to Khabarovsk and Vladivostok in the east.

N.T. It was certainly a magnificent festival.

G.I. Yes, but it wasn't simply fun.

The Festival was unique in that it brought a cross-section of Indian art and culture to practically all corners of our country. We played host to the best solo performers and folk groups from all 25 states of friendly India. They gave a total of 1,900 concerts.

Our public showed tremendous interest in India's distinctive culture, both in large cities and small towns. Small-town audiences were, perhaps, especially appreciative because they do not see much of guest concert companies – and of interesting shows in general.

N.T. The Festival's cultural programme did not confine itself to concerts, did it?

G.I. It certainly didn't. Numerous exhibitions added greatly to the Soviet people's knowledge of India and of various aspects of life there. Exhibitions were arranged in 20 Soviet cities, attracting over two million visitors. Classical and modern painting; sculpture; architecture and weaving; arts and crafts; books; the scenic beauty of India; the story of Mahatma Gandhi's life and work; the position of women in India; Indian science and technology... Such, to name but a few, were the subjects of the exhibitions. And what about the children's exhibition "My Land, My People"? How important it is for the rising generation in both the U.S.S.R. and India to learn more about the other friendly country! The Festival's last exhibition, "Druzhba-Dosti", tracing the links between the two nations over the ages, was opened in Moscow's Tretyakov Gallery late in May. Its opening was timed to coincide with an important conference of scientists, politicians and public figures on the subject "Parallels and interactions between the peoples of India and the U.S.S.R. through the ages to the present day."

In general, seminars and symposiums – of which there were 15 – were an important constituent part of the Festival, which gave Soviet and Indian experts in various spheres a chance to mix with each other, enrich their professional knowledge, and make new contacts.

Younger people had numerous get-togethers during the tours of our country by Indian youth delegations (500 youths and girls altogether) and athletic groups (about 250-strong in all). Add to this the Indian film festivals held in 24 Soviet cities, and regular transmissions of Indian cultural programmes over our radio and television.

Combined, all these events have projected the art and culture of friendly India practically nationwide in our country over the past year. In its impact and scale, the Festival exceeded the boldest expectations.

N.T. The year-long Festival held practically all over the country's territory obviously called for a great deal of organization and for coordinated efforts by the most various services. Tell me frankly: were there any organizational difficulties?

G.I. It was the first time the Soviet Union had hosted such a large-scale and lengthy festival of another state's national culture. It was certainly a success. Were there any organizational difficulties, you ask? Yes, there was no avoiding them. They are inevitable in any large undertaking, and especially in one entirely new to us. There were certain technical problems but, first of all, we didn't have too many of them and, secondly, all of them were promptly

Indian artists did not only perform on the stage.

Twenty Indian travelling exhibitions toured 20 Soviet cities and towns drawing a total of over two million visitors.

dealt with by joint efforts on the part of our own and Indian experts, both in the centre and on local tours, to mutual satisfaction. In any case, all the Festival activities proceeded strictly to schedule. Not a single show, performance or exhibition was called off. We have gained rich experience which, I think, will come in useful in future. And we have learned our lessons, too.

N.T. What were your biggest problems?

G.I. The worst thing was that many of our places the Indian artists visited still have no modern, comfortable hotels with high standards of service. Comfortable transport vehicles are in short supply. In many places, theatres and concert halls leave much to be desired, to put it mildly. In a word, those were manifestations of our inadequate "quality of life" which we now, in the period of perestroika and glasnost, discuss in the open.

Local authorities and cultural bodies did their level best (with only a few lamentable exceptions) to make the Indian guests comfortable. But, I repeat, they were hampered by the lack of material facilities. The problem of the vegetarian diet alone proved a big headache!

Whatever technical problems arose, the Indian guests and their Soviet hosts coped with them in the spirit of complete understanding and teamwork. The enthusiasm of full-house audiences more than made up for certain physical discomforts our guests sometimes experienced in certain small towns.

N.T. Did any interesting shows draw more people than concert halls could accommodate?

G.I. Such things did happen, and that was good. Far from all those who were eager to enjoy the art of outstanding Indian performers were able to do so. As I was on my way to a Ravi Shankar show, people started asking me if I had a spare ticket almost a block away from Moscow's Tchaikovsky Hall where he was to perform.

They have made friends in Moscow.

After a concert at Moscow University's House of Culture, Indian dancers found themselves "besieged" by Indian dancing enthusiasts (girl students, especially) who would not rest until they had been taught the basic movements.

N.T. What can you say about the programme the Indian side offered the Soviet public?

G.I. I think highly of it, on the whole. We saw highly skilled performances of ancient classical and folk dances which afforded us an insight into the very soul of the people. However, our guests gave over only a rather small proportion of their programme to modern pop music, which our youth is so fond of, although this art form is now quite common in India, as far as we know. I think that the Festival programme could have been more varied as to genres. Incidentally, we shared this opinion with the Indians at the end of the Festival, and they agreed with us.

N.T. Well, generally speaking, we've never had a chance to acquaint ourselves with the culture of another country on such a scale before. Does this mean that we have already learned all there is to know about the life and culture of the great Indian people and need no more information about it?

G.I. Of course not. Far from it. On the contrary, what our public has seen and learned over the year of the Festival makes it eager to know still more and to understand still more deeply India's distinctive spiritual heritage with all its wisdom.

It is now safe to claim that the reciprocal national festivals held in the Soviet Union and India have elevated Soviet-Indian cultural relations to a new and much higher level. The task now is to maintain Soviet-Indian cultural exchanges at the level attained thanks to the magnificent India Festival in the Soviet Union and the no less successful U.S.S.R. Festival now in progress in India.

Photos by V. Kryukov and A. Khrupov

(The Soviet Union magazine)

Soviet fightingmen returning home from Afghanistan

The Geneva Accords and stability on Indian subcontinent

Alexei Dmitriev

There are international documents which gain rather than lose in importance as time goes by. These certainly include the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan signed in mid-April 1988. The further the date of concluding them recedes into the past, the more obvious at least two interrelated circumstances become.

On the one hand, the very fact of the agreement having been reached in Geneva is of momentous importance. After all, negotiations dragged out for over six years there and seemed to be deadlocked at times. It is small wonder, therefore, that their successful conclusion had an effect on the entire international situation and bore out the fact that the key to a settlement in even the most complex and fiercest regional conflicts lies in mutual concessions and compromises. This is of vital importance to the whole world – but chiefly to the two regions bordering on Afghanistan: the Middle East and South Asia, for the Indian subcontinent where the situation, as everyone knows, is far from stable.

True enough, Geneva does not furnish a model on which the subcontinent's numerous problems can be resolved; neither does it provide any recipes for their solution. But then it has indicated a definite and clear-cut general way in which to go about looking for their solutions. Working for a mutually acceptable settlement rather than trying to "get the upper hand" in a conflict at all costs – isn't this an approach worthy of the peoples of Hindustan with their age-old wisdom, their traditional love of peace, and their adherence to the constructive principles of non-alignment?

Consequently, the "spirit of Geneva" is the lodestar which is to help this vast and important region of Asia pave the way to a peaceful future.

On the more practical side, the Geneva principles should be translated into political reality. Lest the "spirit of

Geneva" should peter out, all those concerned must abide strictly by the agreements signed there.

The Soviet Union and the government of the Republic of Afghanistan have already got down, in exact conformity with the time limits set, to the fulfilment of their commitments undertaken in Geneva: the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan began on May 15.

There is talk in the West to the effect that this is the result of a "defeat" the Soviet troops have allegedly suffered there. These assertions have nothing to do with reality. How could the Soviet troops have lost a war which they didn't even seek to win? Their mission was different: to help the Afghan army in containing offensive actions by the military formations of the opposition based in neighbouring Pakistan and equipped with latest weapons of American and other makes. The Soviet troops succeeded in that. For all the support it received from the outside, the counterrevolutionary opposition never succeeded in getting either a major Afghan city or a sizeable part of Afghanistan under firm control.

It is an open secret that now, as the Soviet troops are pulling out, the extremist wing of the opposition is entertaining fresh hopes of attaining this goal. G. Hikmatyar, the leader of the Peshawar Seven, and his retinue, do not conceal their intention to carry on the "undeclared war" – what's more, to intensify it in every way. The promise of further American arms deliveries (by way of Pakistan again) encourages the "implacables" to do just that, as evidenced by the barbarous car explosions in Kabul.

Incidentally, the Geneva Accords provide, in no uncertain terms, for ending the "undeclared war" and eliminating its source on Pakistani territory. The attempts to find loopholes in these Accords obviously go to show that certain quarters in Pakistan and the U.S. are not too eager to consistently observe these Accords.

As far as India and other countries of South Asia are concerned, these attempts are fraught not merely with hotbeds of tension dangerously smouldering on their borders, and even breaking into a serious conflagration. Other dangers threaten them, too. To begin with, the weapons supplied by the U.S. and other countries to the Pakistani military regime and to the Peshawar Seven are, according to press reports, constantly used against India; specifically, many of these weapons fall into the hands of Sikh terrorists in Punjab state. The very fact of Pakistan retaining its role as a "frontline state" may perpetuate tension in the region. The ensuing consequences are all the less predictable as under the circumstances Washington is turning a blind eye on Pakistan's efforts to go nuclear.

Another noteworthy thing is that tension in the centre of Asia has long been used by U.S. military circles as a pretext for their own preparations for war on the southern approaches to the continent. It is enough to remind the reader that the U.S. Central Command was set up in 1983, with 19 Asian and African countries, Pakistan and Afghanistan in particular, included in its sphere of activity. On staff maps this strategic area extends to the northeastern part of India, which naturally gives that country cause for concern.

Bakhodyr Shodiyev is back in Tashkent after a tour of combat duty in Afghanistan. A happy reunion!

TASS photo

Moreover, the war in Afghanistan, and especially the presence of Soviet troops there, were used by the Pentagon as an excuse for stepping up its own military presence in the Indian Ocean and for objecting to it being made a zone of peace. If the "undeclared war" against Afghanistan is carried on after Geneva, the pretext for hindering the realization of the "peace zone" idea will remain – despite the Soviet troop pullout now in progress.

And finally, one last point. Islamic fundamentalists gravitating either to the military clerical regime of Pakistan or to Khomeini's Iran, are known to be playing an increasingly important role in the extremist wing of the Afghan opposition. G. Hikmatyar even announced that if the opposition succeeded in capturing at least a part of Afghan territory, he would be prepared to retain a close association with Pakistan – at "state level" this time.

For obvious reasons, most Indian political observers regard the growing role and the consolidation of Islamic fundamentalism in Asia as prejudicial to the interests of their great multinational and multireligious country. This is a well-founded view, all the more so in the light of the need to overcome communalism in India and strengthen its national unity.

The Geneva Accords call for cohesion, not for disunity. During his recent official visit to India, President Najibullah of Afghanistan stressed, with good reason, that the Geneva Accords were in line with the constructive element in international relations embodied in the historic Delhi Declaration on Principles for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free and Non-Violent World.

The same undoubtedly applies to the policy of national reconciliation conducted by the Afghan leadership. It has both Moscow's and Delhi's full support. In Kabul itself this policy is regarded as an extension of the April 1978 revolution under new conditions.

As we look back over the past decade, we can see what hard trials have fallen to its lot and how many mistakes it has committed – from the nationalization of mosque-owned lands to mass repressions involving many of those for whose sake the revolution was carried out. However, just correcting the errors is not enough today. A hand has been extended to opponents of the April revolution. They have been offered numerous government posts, and ex-King Zahir Shah, seen as a symbol of Afghanistan's unity, now commands respect not only in, but outside monarchist circles as well. As for the external conditions essential to bring the most different political forces of the country together within the framework of a coalition – these very conditions have been provided by the Geneva Accords.

This is the real alternative to the continued bloodshed which otherwise appears inevitable. It is not only the people of Afghanistan but those of the neighbouring countries, too, who want an end to hostilities. The reason why Geneva has inspired such great hopes in them is that it offers new and real opportunities for strengthening peace in Asia as a whole. These opportunities are not to be missed; they must be made full use of. Cooperation among Asian countries may go a long way towards this.

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arr. 10.00 a.m.	Varna	dep. 11.00 a.m.
Saturday	Airport	Saturday

*** VARNA — TASHKENT — VARNA (from May 26)**

LZ/SU-505 Tu-154 Thursday		SU/LZ-506 Tu-154 Friday
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